

DUKE
UNIVERSITY



LIBRARY

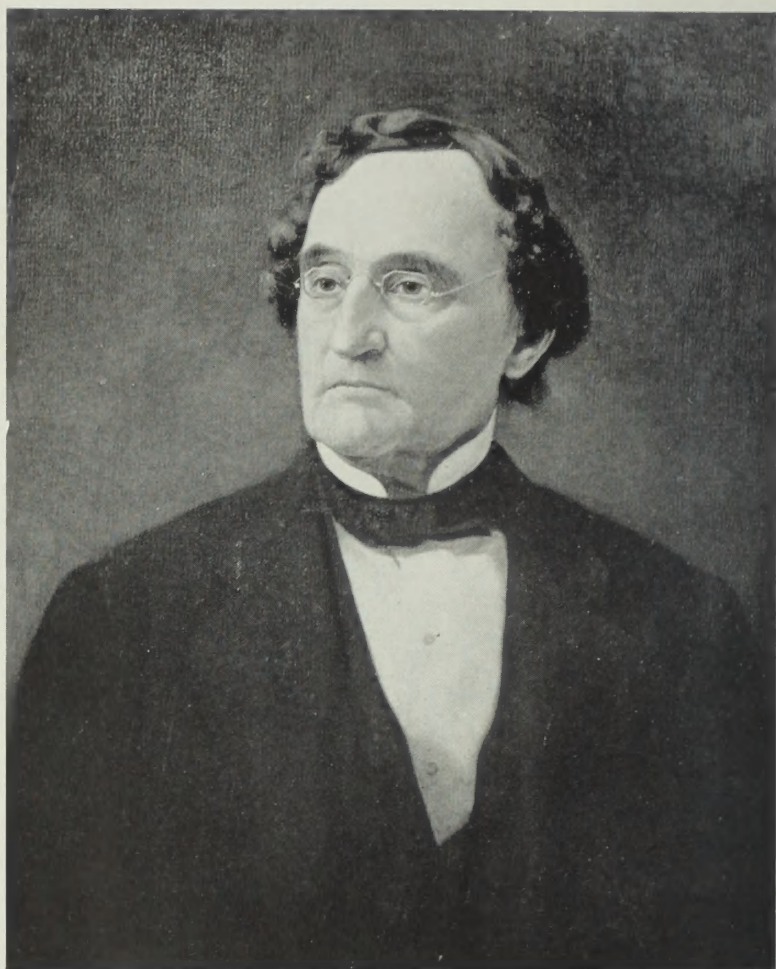
DUKE UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

Benjamin F. Perry

SOUTH CAROLINA UNIONIST



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2021 with funding from
Duke University Libraries



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PERRY

Benjamin F. Perry

SOUTH CAROLINA UNIONIST

BY

LILLIAN ADELE KIBLER



DURHAM, N. C.
DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1946

COPYRIGHT, 1946, BY THE DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BY THE SEEMAN PRINTERY, INC., DURHAM, N. C.

213572
F423.7
— 2

TO MY MOTHER

496297

Foreword

IF EVER American history exhibited an intrepid body of men, it was the Unionists of the Lower South who, believing that secession was a wrong alike to the nation and to Southern interests, battled to the last against a movement that in 1861 became irresistible. Altogether too little justice has been done these men. They combined courage and wisdom in rare degree. Chief Justice William L. Sharkey of Mississippi, a jurist of unspotted honor and great practical sagacity, who refused Cabinet posts under two Presidents; James L. Alcorn of the same state, lawyer, political leader, and a planter of great fortune; James L. Petigru of South Carolina, who never surrendered his convictions or abated the saltiness of his speech; Michael Hahn of Louisiana, a progressive who urged many reforms and whom Stephen A. Douglas counted one of his best Southern friends; rough, indomitable Sam Houston of Texas, who accepted deposition from the governorship and retired to his farm under the stigma of "hoary-headed traitor" rather than take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy—these were some of the more prominent men who opposed the frenzy in the Cotton States to the very end. It is easy to understand why the South has not exalted them. But the nation as a whole should honor their brave devotion to principle.

Of all these Unionists of the Lower South, none is more attractive than Benjamin F. Perry; none had nobler qualities of mind and heart. In no sense a genius, and denied by his unpopular opinions the opportunity to hold high office, he displayed through a remarkably long career a well-rounded

array of qualities backed by nerve, persistence, and keen consciousness of duty. "There was something about Governor Perry that drew him to my heart," wrote a contemporary after his death. "The State owes him a debt of gratitude that it can never repay." So it does. South Carolina had in his time half a dozen men who were and have remained more famous. But none loved South Carolina more warmly, and none did more for her intellectual, social, moral, and political advancement.

The consistency of Perry's public leadership was quite remarkable. Soon after admission to the bar, in 1830-1832, he distinguished himself by his antagonism to nullification; and voting in the State Convention against Calhoun's views, he began to conduct a staunch Unionist paper, the *Greenville Mountaineer*, as an organ of his views. Twenty years later, in 1850, his opinions unaltered, he was meeting another and more formidable movement—this time for outright separation, not nullification—as editor of the one thick-and-thin Unionist paper in South Carolina, the *Southern Patriot*. Ten years later still, he did his utmost to stem the "madness and folly" of rebellion. The crash and clamor of the Civil War passed over his section, leaving ruin and humiliation behind; and amid all the chaos, in 1865-1875 he was still giving battle for his old principles, pleading for a restoration of the Union of hearts. He opposed on the one side the blind rancor of the "unreconstructed" fanatics of South Carolina, and on the other the vindictiveness of those Northern radicals responsible for the worst features of Reconstruction. The early 1880's, fifty years after his first public contests, found him still busy with pen, inculcating the idea of national loyalty.

In some parts of the Upper South, such as Virginia and Tennessee, such a line of action would have been fairly easy. In proud little South Carolina, a virtual republic after she fully accepted the doctrines of Calhoun, it required iron fortitude. Perry had a faith built not upon emotion but upon careful reflection. The tendency of civilization, he correctly wrote, is to enlarge governments, not to disintegrate them.

He opposed the fatal secession impulse, "for I thought I foresaw all the evil consequences which have resulted from it." Once the issue was decided he had to go with his state. "And yet, I conscientiously believed that even the success of the Southern States would be disastrous. The jealousies and errors of the Grecian States were constantly in my mind. Disintegration *once* commenced in a confederation of republics, no one could foresee where it would end, except in petty tyrannies, or in a consolidated military despotism." To fight as he did for his doctrines was the harder because he rather disliked the North, and absolutely detested the abolitionists. His courage went beyond Petigru's, for Petigru was an eccentric to be indulged, a licensed dissenter, of scant political influence. Perry on the other hand was a valorous fighter, of wide influence in upper South Carolina, and his enemies united to destroy him. He strode through storms that would have beaten a lesser man flat to earth.

Miss Kibler's scholarly book, full of interesting new material, does more than portray one of the most striking Southerners of his time. She paints a novel social scene as well. To practically everyone the name South Carolina evokes a vision of Charleston and the low country; of bays, tidal rivers, rice plantations, flat pine-forests, and wide-spreading cotton fields. Some students may think also of Columbia and the middle regions—but that is all. The upper districts of the state, the cooler hill and mountain regions of small farms and varied production, are forgotten. Miss Kibler happily describes them, their principal towns (above all, Greenville), and the special psychology their life produced. In these areas democracy was a vital force. When Perry's name was proposed in 1865 to President Johnson for appointment as provisional governor, the Chief Executive asked: "Is he not too much a man of the people?" He had never been too much a man of the people for his own district, and now he was able to give South Carolina some reforms she had long needed. As provisional governor he helped put through the destruction of the antiquated parish system, the equalization of representation, the popular

election of governor and presidential electors, and the extension of free public education. A true son of the up country, Perry expressed all its latent liberalism and at some points quite transcended its best views. His statesmanlike temper in dealing with the Negro was remarkable. He warmly appreciated the "quiet, industrious, and loyal" conduct of the slaves during the war, and publicly praised it. "I thought as a matter of policy and justice," he writes, "that the intelligent property-holders amongst the freedmen should be allowed to vote, and so stated in the original draft of my first message to the [Constitutional] convention." A remarkable attitude for any Southerner in 1865!

But the primary interest of Miss Kibler's valuable work is not personal, nor social, but political. A varied and stirring drama is reviewed in these pages. Beginning in the 1820's and ending in the 1880's, it chronicles a tremendous revolution. Until now South Carolina's great surge toward independence and her crushing defeat have almost invariably been chronicled from the disunionist point of view. It is highly illuminating to look through this new lens and see the picture as it appeared to the staunch band of Unionists centering around Perry, Petigru, and Poinsett. What a gulf there is between the fire-eaters on one side, and the conservatives on the other; between Hammond, Pickens, Rhett, and Keitt, all eager for the fray, and the immovable Perry, warning earnestly against the precipice whither the majority were heading! The political history of South Carolina from Calhoun's Exposition down to the black-and-tan legislature described by J. S. Pike is almost continuously exciting and often sensational. Miss Kibler misses none of its exterior or interior values. Her research at last reveals the true importance of the long-neglected Unionists of the state, and shows the real stature and the many-sided usefulness of their most devoted, tenacious, and farsighted leader—a man who lived to see his main ideas vindicated and his progressive objects largely realized.

ALLAN NEVINS

Preface

IN PRESENTING this biography of Benjamin F. Perry, my primary motive is to throw new light on the secessionist conflict that dominated the political life of South Carolina for several decades preceding the Civil War. As the dauntless leader of the Unionists in the up-country district of Greenville, Perry was a major factor in steering the state from disunion in the nullification conflict of 1832 and the secession movement of 1850. In 1860 the tide overwhelmed him, but he fought valiantly to the end. Then, bowing to the decision of his state, he served loyally during the Confederacy, and afterwards as provisional governor did all in his power to bind the wounds of his suffering fellow-citizens.

It was not only as a Unionist but as a progressive that Perry played a pre-eminent role in the history of South Carolina. He was farsighted beyond his times. While Calhoun preached resistance to the Federal Government as the solution of the economic ills of the South, Perry urged diversification of agriculture and development of manufactures. For thirty years he battled the state rights party on the floors of the South Carolina legislature, striving to end the aristocratic rule of the parishes and attain equality of representation and other democratic reforms. But he was in a hopeless minority. It was not until his provisional governorship that he had the satisfaction of seeing his liberal measures adopted. During the dark days of Reconstruction Perry was of one heart and mind with his fellow-Carolinians. The first to raise battle against the Radicals, he fought by the side of Hampton for redemption of the state. He died acclaimed as one of Carolina's

greatest sons—high tribute to a man who had spent the best years of his life opposing the state's accepted creed.

I have tried to recreate the secession story from the viewpoint of the Unionists, using a wealth of unexplored material to reveal this side of the drama. The rich manuscript material left by Perry has furnished the nucleus for my work. His two autobiographies, his diary covering a period of thirty years, his manuscript speeches, ledgers, and case books have given a full account of his personal life. The Perry Papers, containing hundreds of letters from distinguished Carolina statesmen—many of them Perry's Unionist friends, have proved of great assistance. I have diligently searched other manuscript collections for any additional light on the part played by the Unionists in the stirring scenes of South Carolina history and have been rewarded by an occasional find of great value in the slim extant collections of South Carolina Unionists and in the voluminous correspondence of South Carolina secessionists, such as James H. Hammond and William P. Miles. For Perry's provisional governorship numerous letters in his papers depicted graphically conditions within the state, and the Johnson and Seward Papers supplied an account of his official relations with Washington. To complete the secession story and give it life and color, I have read files of the Greenville newspapers throughout Perry's career and supplemented them with many other South Carolina newspapers of various viewpoints to give a well-rounded picture of the times.

I could not have written this biography without the assistance of many friends. I owe my deepest debt of gratitude to Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University, to whose inspiring guidance and keen criticism whatever merit the book possesses is largely due. I wish also to thank Professors D. D. Wallace and C. E. Cauthen of Wofford College and J. M. Lesesne of Erskine College for reading the manuscript and offering helpful suggestions.

The Perry family have co-operated with me heartily throughout the undertaking. Mrs. Hugh C. Haynsworth, of Sumter, South Carolina, shared with me memories of her

grandfather, lent me his two valuable autobiographies, and supplied me with photographs of the family. Her late husband, an ardent admirer of Perry, was ever ready to aid and encourage me. Mrs. Sam Rice Baker, of Montgomery, Alabama, Perry's great-granddaughter, kindly allowed me to use several volumes of Perry's private letters and generously furnished me with reproductions of the portraits of Perry and his wife by William G. Brown. Mr. Hext M. Perry, of Greenville, and Mr. James Y. Perry, of Columbia, Perry's grandsons, granted me interesting interviews. Mrs. Hext Perry had a portrait of Perry copied for the frontispiece.

To others who have been of assistance in various ways I am very grateful. Mrs. Marie Owens cordially granted me the use of the Perry Papers in the Alabama Archives, and, together with members of her staff, rendered my stay in Montgomery a real pleasure. Other librarians and custodians of archives extended me many courtesies. I wish especially to thank Miss Ellen Fitzsimons of the Charleston Library Society, Professor Robert L. Meriwether of the South Caroliniana Library, and the librarians of the Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina. Mr. J. L. Sheldon, of Westminster, rendered valuable service by guiding me to Perry's boyhood home, and Mrs. Mary Simms Oliphant, of Greenville, visited with me Perry's later homes and pointed out many places of historic interest in Greenville. My niece, Jeannette Holley Boucher, drew the maps of South Carolina in 1790 and 1825.

To my readers I wish to address a word of explanation. In the copious quotations that I have made from source material throughout the book I have in every instance given a literal reproduction, preserving the spelling and punctuation of the writer. To avoid frequent interruption of the narrative, I have dispensed with the formality of inserting *sic* after the numerous obvious errors.

LILLIAN A. KIBLER

CONVERSE COLLEGE

June 1, 1946

Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. An Immigrant to the Back Country	3
II. Childhood in Old Pendleton District	23
III. Escape from the "Prison-Farm"	34
IV. Education in Law and Politics	44
V. A Lawyer Emerges	58
VI. A Young Gallant of Greenville	71
VII. Editor of the Greenville <i>Mountaineer</i>	87
VIII. The Editor Turns Duelist	108
IX. The Nullification Battle	137
X. Proscription Begins: Congressional Races, 1834, 1835	159
XI. Marriage and Domestic Felicity	177
XII. Citizen of Greenville, 1835-1850	195
XIII. State Politician	217
XIV. The Threat of Secession, 1849-1851	239
XV. The <i>Southern Patriot</i> Triumphs	260
XVI. The Hush before the Storm	278
XVII. Progressive Reformer	302
XVIII. Secession Accomplished	314
XIX. Loyal Confederate	347
XX. A Provisional Governor Is Appointed	371
XXI. Reconstruction under the Johnson Plan	395
XXII. Installation of the New Regime	420
XXIII. A Fight to Obstruct the Radicals	439
XXIV. Prostration	462
XXV. Redemption	483
XXVI. Sans Souci	499
Bibliography	523
Index	537

Illustrations

Benjamin Franklin Perry	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	PAGE
South Carolina in 1790	12
South Carolina in 1825	65
Elizabeth McCall Perry in 1853	<i>facing</i> 180
Group of Perry's Children	<i>facing</i> 186
Perry in 1853	<i>facing</i> 188
South Carolina Districts and Parishes	228
Family Group	<i>facing</i> 312
"No Accommodations" (Cartoon from <i>Harper's Weekly</i> , December 9, 1865)	<i>facing</i> 440
Sans Souci	500

Benjamin F. Perry

SOUTH CAROLINA UNIONIST

CHAPTER ONE

An Immigrant to the Back Country

ON MAY 1, 1860, excited throngs were hurrying along the streets of the city of Charleston toward the hall of the South Carolina Institute, where the national Democratic convention was in session for the eighth consecutive day. On the preceding day had occurred the fateful action that split the Democratic party irreparably and led to the Civil War. When the platform recommended by a majority of the platform committee pledging congressional protection of slavery in the territories had been rejected, Alabama, in determined mood, had announced her withdrawal from the convention. The delegates from Mississippi and Louisiana and the majority of those from South Carolina, Florida, Texas, and Arkansas, amidst the wild applause of the audience, had followed her from the hall. William L. Yancey, the magnetic secessionist orator of Alabama, had galvanized the cotton states into a stand for Southern rights. There had been a jubilee that night in Charleston. Dense crowds had gathered in front of City Hall to hear the fervid addresses of Yancey and Charles E. Hooker of Mississippi, and marched on to the *Mercury* office to serenade South Carolina's own fiery secessionist, Robert Barnwell Rhett.¹

This morning more visitors than ever were pouring into the galleries of the convention hall. They were anticipating a continuation of the stampede that had so delighted them the day before. Tumultuous was their applause when a Georgia

¹ Charleston *Courier*, May 1, 2, 1860; New York *Tribune*, May 2, 1860; Murat Halstead, *Caucuses of 1860: A History of the National Political Conventions of the Current Presidential Campaign* (Columbus, 1860), pp. 66, 73-76.

delegate announced the withdrawal of twenty-six of the thirty-four Georgians from the convention; cheer upon cheer arose when three of the remaining Arkansas delegation followed them from the hall. But the drama thereafter received no responsive outbursts from the visiting throngs. Southern delegates who did not withdraw were rising to explain their action and to plead once more for the unity of the great Democratic party. With impatient restraint the audience bore with the speeches of several of the visiting delegates.²

Suddenly, however, a storm of hisses arose in the gallery. From the seats of the South Carolina delegation, all but two of which had been vacated the day before, a man was rising to address the convention.³ He was of commanding appearance, six feet two and a half inches tall, broad shouldered and well proportioned, bearing himself with military erectness in spite of his fifty-five years. Standing with folded arms, he fixed his gaze fearlessly upon the seething crowds in the galleries. Something in his look aroused the respect of his revilers. The face would arrest attention anywhere—thoughtful gray eyes beneath a high, intellectual brow; a Roman nose; dark brown hair streaked lightly with gray; a large mouth with straight, thin lips; and a firm chin and jaw. There was an adamant strength in his appearance; even strangers intuitively felt that here was a man of character and indomitable will.⁴ The scene impressed itself indelibly upon the memory of the audience.⁵ Thirty years later one of them wrote: "I

² *Proceedings of the Conventions at Charleston and Baltimore. Published by Order of the National Democratic Convention . . . and under the Supervision of the National Democratic Executive Committee* (Washington, 1860), pp. 128-134; Halstead, *Caucuses of 1860*, p. 76.

³ *National Democratic Convention Proceedings*, 1860, p. 135; *New York Tribune*, May 3, 1860; Benjamin F. Perry, *Biographical Sketches of Eminent American Statesmen, with Speeches, Addresses, and Letters* (Philadelphia, 1887), p. 188.

⁴ Mrs. B. F. Perry (ed.), *Letters Acknowledging Receipt of Gov. Benjamin Franklin F. Perry's "Letters to His Wife"* (Greenville, S. C., 1891), pp. 121, 124; Benjamin F. Perry Journal, 1832-63 (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina), I, July 9, 1837; Benjamin F. Perry Autobiography, 1849 (MS in possession of Mrs. Hugh C. Haynsworth), pp. 120-121; Mrs. B. F. Perry (ed.), *Tribute to Benjamin Franklin Perry, Ex-Governor of South Carolina* (Greenville, S. C., 1888), p. 61.

⁵ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 602-603.

love to think of him standing alone in the National Democratic Convention, held in this city in May, 1861 [1860], reviled and hissed, like some great rock standing grand and immovable out of the sea, with the maddened waves hissing and beating against its base."⁶

Above the noise of the galleries arose the voice of Mr. Bedford Brown of North Carolina. "Mr. President," he cried, "I move that the galleries be cleared."

But the fearless South Carolinian turned to the presiding officer. "Mr. President," he said, in the strong, deep tones and deliberate manner in which he always spoke, "let them remain. I wish them to hear what I have to say."⁷

"Who is he?" asked a stranger of his Charleston neighbor.

"He's Benjamin F. Perry of Greenville, the most prominent Unionist in the up country," was the reply.

Among the audience were scattered many of Perry's friends and associates in the legislature. There was nothing new in the scene to them. How often had they seen him rise on the side of a hopeless minority in the South Carolina Assembly—fighting with all the force of his vigorous intellect for the cause that seemed right to him!⁸ His was a familiar name throughout the state, associated with absolute integrity and honesty, and unshaken loyalty to the Union.⁹ On the bench next to a vociferous hisser in the gallery sat James L. Petigru, the well-known Charleston Unionist, a dear friend of Perry's. He restrained himself from pulling the nose of his "miscreant" neighbor only because he sat with ladies and friends.¹⁰

Shamed by the equanimity and earnestness of Perry, the

⁶ *Letters Acknowledging Perry's "Letters to His Wife,"* p. 89.

⁷ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 188; *New York Tribune*, May 3, 1860; National Democratic Convention *Proceedings*, 1860, p. 135.

⁸ William Wallace to Mrs. Perry, December 17, 1888, in *Tribute to Perry*, pp. 62-63; John S. Riggs to *idem*, September 22, 1890, in *Letters Acknowledging Perry's "Letters to His Wife,"* p. 102.

⁹ *In Memoriam Benjamin Franklin Perry, Ex-Governor of South Carolina* (Greenville, 1887), *passim*.

¹⁰ J. L. Petigru to B. F. Perry, October 8, 1860, Perry Papers (MSS in possession of Mrs. Sam Rice Baker). This collection will be referred to hereinafter as *Perry Papers* (Baker Coll.).

galleries finally became quiet.¹¹ Then, as if he singly could heal the fatal breach that was dividing the two sections of his beloved country, he pled with all his power for a reconciliation of the Northern and Southern Democracy. He was convinced that on the unity of the party depended the perpetuity of the Union. He condemned his colleagues for quitting the convention, stating that they had been sent by the state convention to make a nomination for President and not to break up the Democratic party and the Union. In regard to his own action, he said with deep feeling:

I stand before you, Mr. President, an old-fashioned Union Democrat, born and bred such, and such I have continued, consistently, without faltering or wavering in my faith, amidst the storms of secession and nullification which have swept over South Carolina. I am a Southern man in heart and feeling, and identified with the South, my birth-place, by every tie that is sacred on earth and every interest that can bind a man to his own native soil. I love the South, and it is because I love her, and would guard her against evils which no one can foresee or foretell, that I am a Union man and a follower of Washington's faith and creed. It was as a Democrat and a Union man that I came into this Convention, determined to do all that I could to preserve the Democratic party and the Union of the States.¹²

II

Whence came the strength of character that enabled this man to stand steadfastly for principle in the face of unpopularity and repeated defeat, to fight on doggedly for a cause when he saw his party ever dwindling in his native state, to sacrifice personal ambition in an attempt to save the South?

¹¹ *Tribute to Perry*, p. 61; conversation of Bishop Ellison Capers with Perry's daughter, the late Mrs. Fannie Perry Beattie, repeated to author by Mrs. Beattie's son-in-law, Mr. Hugh C. Haynsworth. Capers, then a young instructor at The Citadel, was among those in the gallery who hissed Perry. He reported that Perry's insistence that they remain won the respect of his revilers and produced order. Years afterwards, when he was rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Greenville, he learned to know Perry intimately and to admire him greatly. He was heartily ashamed of his action in the convention.

¹² Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 145-151; National Democratic Convention *Proceedings*, pp. 135-136; *Charleston Courier*, May 2, 1860.

Had he imbibed the rugged virility of the mountains, or developed breadth of vision from the rolling green hills and valleys, in the up country where he lived? There was much in such a region to nourish manly attributes. But for his finer traits of character we must look to the qualities interwoven into his being from a long line of sturdy forebears. He was not the first Perry who sacrificed everything for conviction.

More than two hundred years earlier his ancestor, John Perry, had joined the little band of Puritans who left England with John Eliot to seek refuge for their faith in a new land. He became a freeholder in Roxbury, Massachusetts, on March 4, 1633, and lived in the colony till his death nine years later. The eldest of his three surviving children, John, removed from Roxbury to Medfield, Massachusetts, in 1672, thence to Sherborn, a village about twenty miles from Boston.¹³ There he built a family mansion, in which his descendants lived for generations. The Perrys were prominent in the life of the town, and seem to have held staunchly to the faith of their ancestor.¹⁴ John's grandson, Moses, was reported to have been "*a regular old puritan—decided—firm—independent.*" Such was his opposition to any innovation in worship that he rose and left the church when a bass viol was introduced to assist in the singing.¹⁵

Moses was the father of sixteen children, twelve by his first wife, Deborah Ivery, and four by his second, Susanna Child. With two by the first marriage we are particularly concerned—Benjamin, the father of Benjamin F. Perry, and his older brother, Nathaniel. The latter resided in Salem, Massachusetts, where he was engaged in an extensive mercantile business that carried him to England and the Continent. He

¹³ Aaron Fyfe Perry, *Memoranda concerning Descendants of John Perry*, John Strong, John Fyfe, Robert Gray (Cincinnati, 1878), p. 1; Benjamin Franklin Perry Autobiography, 1874 (MS in possession of Mrs. Hugh C. Haynsworth), pp. 1-2.

¹⁴ Abner Morse, *A Genealogical Register of the Inhabitants and History of the Towns of Sherborn and Holliston* (Boston, 1856), pp. 178, 190, 276-278, 286-287, 312-317.

¹⁵ Edmund Dowse to Perry, February 24, 1859, Perry Papers (Manuscript Division, Alabama State Department of Archives and History). Citations hereinafter to Perry Papers will refer to this collection unless otherwise specified.

served for several years during the American Revolution, being with Washington at Valley Forge. Benjamin, a lad of fourteen, heard the firing at Lexington as he was leading a horse to the plow in his father's fields at Sherborn. Two years later he volunteered and fought with the forces of General Sullivan and Count D'Estaing in the invasion of Rhode Island.

After the Revolution, Nathaniel, having suffered reverses in business, went to Charleston, South Carolina, where he worked for the mercantile firm of Wadsworth and Turpin. Benjamin, who had meanwhile been employed as clerk in a Boston store owned by a Mr. Gray, joined Nathaniel in Charleston in 1784. Wadsworth and Turpin then suggested that the two brothers take an assortment of goods into the back country and start a store there.¹⁶

III

Accordingly, they made their way from the thriving metropolis and the aristocratic parishes of the tidewater, where the plantation barons held sway, through the swamps, pine barrens, and the more fertile upper pine belt of the coastal plain, into the hills of the Piedmont, then known as the "back country" and later the "up country." This area in the northwestern section of the state, which covered about one third of the whole, presented a marked contrast to the "low country." Situated in the foothills of the Blue Ridge, its topography varied from plateau and gently sloping hills at the fall line, where the rivers flowed over the sand hills into the coastal plain, to steeper hills and small mountains in the extreme northwestern area, where the rivers carved deep and fertile valleys across the plateau.¹⁷ The landscape was luxuriant and picturesque. A British traveler wrote in 1784 that "nothing

¹⁶ *Idem* to *Idem*, December 1, 1858, *ibid.*; Morse, *Genealogical Register and History of Sherborn and Holliston*, p. 191; Autobiography, 1849, p. 2; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 4, 7-8. In his first Autobiography, and in his Journal, I, 3, Perry gives 1785 as the date for his father's arrival in Charleston. In the light of subsequent land grants, the date 1784, given in his last Autobiography, appears correct.

¹⁷ Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina 1729-1765* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1940), pp. 3-10, 113-115; William A. Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *American Historical Association Report*, 1900, I, 248-258.

can be imagined more pleasant to the eye than the back country, and its fruitfulness is almost incredible."¹⁸ In the latter part of the eighteenth century there were no denuded hillsides and deep red gulleys to mar the countryside. The region abounded in pine and hardwood forests, which were easily cleared since the trees were large and far apart, with either deep grass or pea vines growing beneath them. The fertile river valleys and stretches of prairie were covered with a dense growth of cane, varying from five to thirty feet in height. In the woods and on the hillsides roamed cattle, horses, and hogs. The country abounded in wild animal life, and the clear streams teemed with fish. It had long been the favorite hunting ground of the Cherokees.¹⁹

Except for a few daring Indian traders, no settlers had penetrated into this region until Governor Robert Johnson's township scheme of 1730, providing liberal land grants and other bounties to Protestant immigrants, had insured settlement of the middle country and thus removed the fear of prospective immigrants that they would be hopelessly isolated from the settled coast.²⁰ In the 1740's immigrants from the back country of Virginia and Pennsylvania ventured into the South Carolina back country, at first following the old Cherokee path along the western valley of Saluda River. Since the lands in the northwestern section were still held by the formidable Cherokee Indians, there was no large addition to these pioneer settlements until the agents of prospective settlers had persuaded Governor Glen and the Commons House of the Assembly to extinguish the Indian titles. The Commons decided upon Ninety Six, which had been a trading post on the Saluda since 1730, as the most desirable place for settlement, and in 1747 purchased from the Cherokees the lands

¹⁸ J. F. D. Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America* (London, 1784), II, 75.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79; D. Huger Bacot, "The South Carolina Up Country at the End of the Eighteenth Century," *American Historical Review*, XXVIII (July, 1923), 683, 693; John H. Logan, *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina From the Earliest Periods to the Close of the War of Independence* (Charleston, 1859), I, 1-121, 149-166.

²⁰ Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, pp. 33-109.

east and south of Long Cane Creek. By 1752 about forty families from Virginia and other states to the north had settled here between the Savannah and Saluda rivers. From 1750 to 1770 a constant stream of immigration came in overland from the north and spread over all the Piedmont except the Cherokee region in the extreme northwest—the present counties of Pickens, Oconee, Anderson, and Greenville. Before the Revolution the four large river valleys of the Piedmont—the Savannah, Saluda, Broad, and Catawba-Wateree—had all received a tide of immigrants.

During the latter years of the French and Indian War the Cherokees, though at first loyal allies of the English, took the war path, massacring many settlers on the Enoree, the Long Cane, and the Saluda. They were finally subdued, and by the Treaty of 1761 ceded to the province the Piedmont region south and east of the present counties of Anderson and Greenville. After the Cherokee War of 1776 they surrendered their remaining lands—except a very narrow strip in the northwest which they held until 1817. Then there was a rapid influx of Scotch-Irish and German immigrants from the frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina into this fertile region. These industrious farmers came overland through the mountain valleys, driving their stock before them and carrying their meager belongings in wagons.²¹

Though pioneers from the north—Scotch-Irish predominating—played the most important role in the settlement of the Piedmont, immigrants from the British Isles and Europe, brought in by generous bounties, were also prominent. The bounty laws of 1751 and 1761, like that of 1731, attempted to solve the problem of an ever-increasing preponderance of Negro population by offering liberal inducements to poor white Protestants to settle in the province. Under the law of 1751 over a thousand Germans located in what became known

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-146, 213-240; David Duncan Wallace, *The History of South Carolina* (New York, 1934), I, 447-448, II, 10-12, 24-34, 42-44, 164-167, 339; Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 277-278; Bacot, "The South Carolina Up Country," *loc. cit.*, pp. 684-685. The boundary vaguely indicated in the Treaty of 1761 was surveyed in 1766-67 (Wallace, *op. cit.*, II, 34).

as the "Dutch Fork" between the Broad and Saluda rivers. In 1762 and 1764 townships were laid off west of Ninety Six, which were mostly colonized by Scotch-Irish, though a few hundred French Huguenots settled in Hillsborough township, and as many Germans in Londonborough.²²

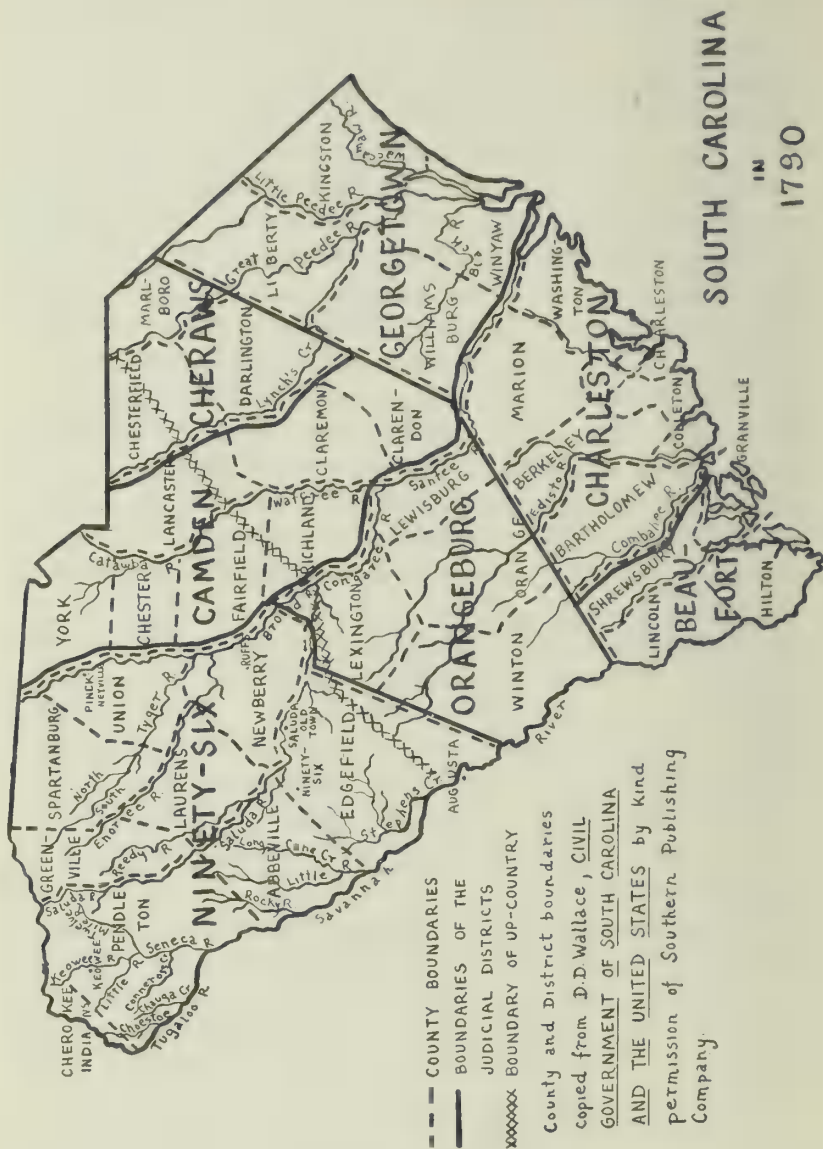
There was a wide economic divergence between the up country and the low. When the Perry brothers entered the Piedmont in 1784 or 1785, it was still a heavily wooded area, excellently adapted to the raising of stock and cultivation of grain, but entirely unsuited to the staple crops of the low country. It was not until the invention of the cotton gin made the growing of short-staple cotton profitable that cotton and slavery invaded the up country to any considerable extent—even then not the mountainous districts. Though the sturdy farmers of the up country raised grain and livestock greatly in excess of their own needs, difficulty in transportation made them practice an almost self-sufficient economy. The rapid rivers and numerous creeks that cut across the plateaus made commerce almost impossible. If the settlers wished to dispose of their surplus produce, they had to load it in wagons and make the toilsome journey of from one hundred to three hundred miles over the rough roads beside the rivers to Charleston or Augusta, where they encountered discouraging competition with like commodities from the middle country or Pennsylvania.²³ Thus the up country remained in isolation, "a back country indeed—until the slow coming of the canal, railroad, and cotton."²⁴

Nathaniel and Benjamin had very little prospect for gaining wealth in their mercantile venture in the back country, for the farmers had no money to purchase luxuries, and often, even in the purchase of necessities, had to resort to bartering goods. But the brothers chose what they considered a good

²² Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 41-46; Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, pp. 150-155, 241-261.

²³ Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 256-258, 319-324, 384-389; Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, pp. 113-115, 160-173; Bacot, "The South Carolina Up Country," *loc. cit.*, p. 691.

²⁴ Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, p. 115.



SOUTH CAROLINA
IN
1790

location for their store—Ruff's in Newberry County,²⁵ a populous settlement just above the "Dutch Fork." It was on a cross road that ran from the village of Newberry to the ferry across Broad River and the wagon road following its western bank.²⁶ Evidently this enterprise did not prove successful, for next year the Perrys moved to that part of old Ninety Six District which soon became Greenville County, and planted their store about six miles above the present city of Greenville.²⁷ Since land grants to Nathaniel on Moore's Fork of Enoree River in July and August, 1785, show the purchase of 638 acres, the brothers evidently engaged in farming as well as selling merchandise.²⁸ The Enoree community, though settled since the middle of the century,²⁹ was poor and thinly populated; and in the period of financial chaos between the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution a mercantile venture here was extremely precarious. The farmers had no money for "calicoes & broad clothes," though always eager to buy on credit. A situation arose in Greenville which, though ludicrous, completely ruined the business prospects of the firm.³⁰ The South Carolina legislature passed a property tender law in 1785 forcing creditors to accept until 1787 any property that debtors might offer in lieu of money payment³¹ at two thirds the value set by assessors chosen jointly by the creditor and debtor. Accordingly, debtors began to bring blind horses, lame cows, yokes of oxen, and various other worthless material to the store; and since all the community was indebted to the firm, neighbors conspired to set exorbitant prices on the articles offered. The Perrys, unable to sell the strange collection, sent it on to Wadsworth and Turpin in Charleston.³²

²⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 8-9; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 2-3.

²⁶ Robert G. Mills, *Atlas of the State of South Carolina* (Philadelphia, 1825), "Newberry District."

²⁷ Autobiography, 1874, p. 8.

²⁸ Grant Book, IV (1785), 170, 378 (Office of South Carolina Secretary of State).

²⁹ Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, pp. 149-150.

³⁰ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 8-10.

³¹ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 328.

³² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 8-10.

A year later the store was moved to a point that evidently proved more profitable, for here it seems to have remained until 1791. This time the brothers chose a spot directly on the main thoroughfare between the up country and the low—the old Cherokee path, now widened into a wagon road, that ran from Keowee, formerly in the Lower Towns of the Cherokees, along the Saluda, Congaree, and Santee rivers to Charleston. It was on Twelve Mile River not far from Keowee in old Ninety Six District—in the part that is now Pickens County—that they bought their land.³³ Benjamin purchased 640 acres on Wolf Creek of Twelve Mile River on June 5, 1786; Nathaniel three months later bought 776 acres on Ravens and Buck creeks of the same river; and the following summer Benjamin added 539 acres to his former purchase.³⁴

A letter written from Charleston by Nathaniel to his brother and sister in Sherborn in the spring of 1787 gives some idea of the activities of the two sojourners in the Carolina back country and reveals the sterling character and philosophical mind of the writer:

I wish, I long for that happy period to arrive when I may return to my native country in peace and safety, but the old chain of misfortune with which I am bound at present will not suffer it. . . . Since I have been in this country my emoluments have been but trifling, yet I think I have done better than I could in New England. . . . Justice to my creditors and even to my own feelings will not permit me to relinquish the thoughts of striving to acquire a sufficient [sum] to discharge the demands against me . . . and I sincerely pray that I may have fortitude sufficient not to murmur or repine at what Providence has allotted for me. I have a soul that ought to rise above it and look down with contempt on many little worthless fellows who, by mere luck or chance and not from any good judgement or penetration of their own, accidentally step into the road to success. . . . I left my brother Benjamin about three weeks since in the country in good health and spirits where

³³ Meriwether, *Expansion of South Carolina*, maps, pp. 2, 112; Mills, *Atlas of the State of South Carolina*, "Pendleton District."

³⁴ Grant Book, X (1786), 397; XI (1786), 599-600; XVIII (1786-87), 405 (Office of South Carolina Secretary of State).

he will tarry this summer coming, after which we shall endeavor to be together again.³⁵

In the summer of 1788 Benjamin revisited his old home in Massachusetts—the last contact made by the two brothers with their Massachusetts relatives. A number of years after his father's death Perry opened a correspondence with Edmund Dowse, Congregational minister at Sherborn, grandson of his father's sister, Deborah. Dowse was delighted to hear from him, as the family in Massachusetts had given Benjamin and Nathaniel up for dead, and spoke of them as the "lost Perrys." Dowse's father, many years after their departure from Sherborn, had bought the land on which Nathaniel had laid the foundation for a home and had built a house over the same cellar. Dowse reported that all the sons of Moses Perry, Perry's grandfather, were "men of good natural abilities and very enterprising," and that Nathaniel especially was "a man of large abilities—and of a good deal of pride and character."³⁶ It was rumored that Benjamin, on his last visit to Sherborn, proposed matrimony to a lady in Sherborn, whose parents declined allowing her to go to such a "far off & wild" country.³⁷

When Benjamin returned to Charleston, he witnessed the celebration of the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and later often described the magnificent spectacle. He was present also at the burning of the old State House and worked for several hours with the bucket brigade attempting to extinguish the flames.³⁸

There is no further record of the Perry brothers until 1791, when new land grants indicate that they moved from their location on Twelve Mile River to lands on the creeks of Tugaloo River, a branch of the Savannah, on the extreme north-western boundary of the state. On December 5, 1791, Benjamin purchased 280 acres on Choestow Creek, adjoining a

³⁵ Typescript copy, Nathaniel Perry to Brother and Sister, April 28, 1787, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

³⁶ E. Dowse to Perry, December 1, 1858, Perry Papers.

³⁷ *Idem* to *idem*, February 24, 1859, *ibid.*

³⁸ Autobiography, 1874, p. 10; Autobiography, 1849, p. 3.

farm of 160 acres which Nathaniel had purchased a few months before. It was on this land that Benjamin built his permanent home, adding 500 acres a short distance away on Coneross Creek of Keowee River in 1798. Nathaniel remained in the same locality, purchasing 471 additional acres in 1793, and a valuable estate of 210 acres eight or ten miles distant on Chauga Creek in 1798, on which he built a very fine country home. At the same time he purchased extensive lands on other streams nearby. The joint purchase by Nathaniel and Benjamin of 364 acres on Shoal Creek, a branch of Choestow Creek, in 1794 indicates that they placed their store very near Benjamin's home.³⁹

The property of the two brothers was situated in what was then Pendleton County of Washington District, a new district carved from old Ninety Six District in 1791;⁴⁰ Pendleton County in 1798 became Pendleton District, comprising the present counties of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens. It was the most mountainous district of the state, and thus the most picturesque and romantic. Robert Mills called it "the Switzerland of South Carolina." Situated in the extreme north-western section of the state, it had been in the possession of the Cherokees until the treaty of 1777. In it were remains of the Cherokee Lower Towns and of famous Fort Prince George at Keowee, erected by Governor James Glen in 1753. It was not until after the Revolution that any considerable number of settlers from the north came down the valleys into this beautiful country; and some few, like the Perrys, came up from Charleston.⁴¹ They were attracted by the rich soil, the numerous streams, the rolling green hills covered with wild pea vines that furnished excellent forage for cattle, the invigorating

³⁹ Grant Books, D, No. 5, Vol. 29, 2nd class, p. 241; C, No. 5, Vol. 28, 2nd class, p. 379; K, No. 5, Vol. 43, pp. 405, 408-409, 411-412; I, No. 5, Vol. 35, 2nd class, p. 425; H, No. 5, Vol. 3, 2nd class, p. 194 (Office of South Carolina Secretary of State); Autobiography, 1849, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 369.

⁴¹ Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina, including a View of its Natural, Civil, and Military History, General and Particular* (Charleston, 1826), pp. 671-690; Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, p. 249.

climate, and the beautiful view of the Blue Ridge only twenty-five miles away. Military heroes, like General Andrew Pickens, Colonel Benjamin Cleveland, Colonel Robert Anderson, Samuel Earle, and Horse Shoe Robinson, settled here. A little later many wealthy residents of the low country came to Pendleton Court House as a summer resort, built fine homes, and then remained.⁴² The village became noted for its "very select society."⁴³ A young tutor from Connecticut, visiting General Pickens's son in 1806, was delighted to find such culture and politeness among the reputedly "*unrefined people of the upper country*."⁴⁴

Because of its inaccessibility and mountainous topography, old Pendleton District represented perhaps more strikingly than any other district in the state the contrast between up country and low country. The census of 1800 shows that the rapid influx of immigrants since 1783 had brought the white population to 17,670, while the Negro slaves numbered only 2,224. In the low country this ratio of whites and blacks was reversed. Pendleton became distinctly an area of small farmers, who raised livestock, grain, and other products for home consumption. Since slaves were few, the farmers, along with their children, worked in the fields. Every family spun and wove cloth of flax, cotton, or wool for its own use. The distance from market stimulated such a development of home industry that Pendleton became known as a "manufacturing" section.⁴⁵ Widely different was this settlement of sturdy, independent yeomen of the hill country from the old aristocratic settlements of the low country—from Charleston, the sophisticated commercial metropolis, and from the rice and cotton plantations with their lordly masters and their dense masses of Negro slaves!

The stage was early set for the conflict between the up

⁴² R. W. Simpson, *History of Old Pendleton District with a Genealogy of the Leading Families of the District* (Anderson, S. C., 1913), pp. 15-24.

⁴³ Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, p. 674.

⁴⁴ "Diary of Edward Hooker, 1805-1808," *American Historical Association Report*, 1896, pp. 902-903.

⁴⁵ Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, pp. 673-679.

country and the low that remained the most trying problem in state politics until the Civil War. It is a story of resentment of independent white farmers at the unfair control of the state government by the aristocratic plantation owners of the low country, and of a determined struggle for equality of representation that would give the up-country districts, with their overwhelmingly greater white population, their share in the government of the state. To the slave-owning aristocrats these democratic frontiersmen seemed rude interlopers endangering the established society of the state. Only after clamorous demands was the up country granted, by the Constitutions of 1776 and 1778, a small number of representatives in the General Assembly. The low country, though containing a much smaller white population, retained its control of both houses until in 1808 an amendment of the Constitution of 1790 provided that representation in the House should be based equally on white population and amount of taxes paid. Even then the low country retained control of the state Senate by the provision that each of its parishes should have one senator—the same as each of the large election districts.⁴⁶

IV

Benjamin Perry built his home on the land he had purchased on Choestow Creek just above its juncture with Tugaloo River in 1791. It was in a remote and picturesque section of what is now Oconee County, twenty-three miles from old Pendleton Court House.⁴⁷ Forests of white oak, poplar, maple, and gum shaded the bottom lands along the branches of the creek, where luxuriant grass invited the grazing of livestock, and the clear waters sparkled with myriads of shad, perch, catfish, and suckers. The uplands were densely covered with sturdier oak trees, hickory, pine, and chestnut. Extending in

⁴⁶ Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 248-249, 274-280, 431-436.

⁴⁷ Autobiography, 1874, p. 10. The farm is about five miles from the present village of Oakway, on a lonely country road about one and a half miles beyond Union Baptist Church. Westminster, nine or ten miles away, is the nearest town. (Visit of author to site, August 28, 1941.)

a wide vista in every direction were rolling green hills, with lofty mountains of the Blue Ridge enveloped in a misty haze in the distance.⁴⁸

Here Benjamin kept bachelor's hall, with a West Indian Negro man for cook. For several years he devoted part of his time to farming and part to running the store, which was a rendezvous for the neighborhood. Probably the most celebrated man in the vicinity was Benjamin Cleveland, one of the heroes of King's Mountain, who lived eight miles up the Tugaloo. Often he visited the Perrys' store with his sons and sons-in-law to purchase whiskey. Though not an excessive drinker himself, he had a son called "Devil John" who was the terror of the community. Cleveland was typical of the sturdy, self-reliant frontiersmen of the up country. Though county courts had finally been established in the back country and Cleveland himself was one of the county judges, he executed several horse thieves and Tories without the formality of a trial or prosecution.⁴⁹

In 1798, when thirty-eight, Benjamin Perry married Anna Foster, daughter of John Foster,⁵⁰ a Virginian of English ancestry who had settled in Pinckneyville, Union District, several years before the Revolution and there married Eleanor Collins. While serving as lieutenant at the siege of Savannah, Foster had been forced by cancer of the eye to resign his commission. Soon after the close of the Revolution he moved to the three forks of Saluda River in Greenville District, where he spent the few remaining years of his life. Of his seven or eight children, all except Anna and Robert eventually went West. His wife remained in Greenville District and lived to be nearly one hundred. Perry remembered her with fond affection: "She was a most excellent old lady, kind, affectionate and charitable, and industrious to the last years of her life."⁵¹

⁴⁸ Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, pp. 673-690. Except for the deforestation of the hillsides, the region today resembles Mills's description rather accurately. It is a most beautiful country.

⁴⁹ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 1, 4-5.

⁵⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 12.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

To Benjamin and Anna were born four children: Nathaniel James Foster on December 6, 1798; Harriet Desdemona on November 20, 1801; Benjamin Franklin on November 20, 1805; and Josiah Foster on March 10, 1812. It was a happy family, leading a life of industrious toil on the farm. There was never money for luxurious living, but always enough for comfort and health. Perry remained ardently devoted to his father and mother, who both lived to a ripe old age. In 1832 he wrote in his Diary:

My Father is a very independent farmer possessed of property enough to live well and comfortably. He has always borne the character of an honest correct man, much esteemed by his neighbours and acquaintances. He is the most industrious man I ever knew. My mother is a woman of remarkable natural endowments. She is the kindest and most affectionate mother in the world. . . . I am under great personal obligations to both of them for their extraordinary kindness to me through life. Seldom have parents been more indulgent to a child than they have to me.⁵²

In 1874, many years after his father's death, he thus described him in his Autobiography:

My father was a small man with a full round face, prominent nose, black eyes, dark complexion & jet black hair, which had not changed its color at his death when he was eighty two years old. He had a pleasant agreeable countenance indicative of honor, integrity, firmness and benevolence, which were the distinctive traits of his character. He had received as I have said a good English education and was fond of reading. He was the most industrious man I ever knew & continued to work in his garden after he was eighty years old. He could not be idle. He had but little to do with the world in the latter part of his life, and was a most happy and contented man. Nothing seemed to disturb the equanimity of his mind. I cannot say the same for my mother. Her temperament was warmer & more easily disturbed. I never knew my father to have a difficulty with any one, and I don't think any one ever charged him with an intentional wrong. He was indeed "an honest man the noblest work of God." He never sought office or position of any kind.⁵³

⁵² "Sketch of My Life," Journal, I, 3.

⁵³ Pp. 13-14.

Of his mother he wrote:

She was twenty one years old, when married, & said to have been very handsome. She was tall and stout, with a florid complexion & golden hair. The picture of youth & health. She had an uncommonly strong & vigorous mind by nature. Her education was nothing more than being taught to read & write and a little of arithmetic. She had the kindest heart and most cordial & affectionate disposition ever possessed by woman. She had no taste for reading & her mind was unimproved though capable of the highest culture. Her household affairs & her children occupied her whole time. She was the personification of industry, & not a moment was she idle. Her devotion to her children distinguished her throughout life. I loved her most ardently and affectionately.⁵⁴

It is evident that Perry inherited outstanding characteristics from his parents and from the generations behind them. In his strict honor and integrity, his tireless industry, his firmness, his rigid adherence to principle, and his stern Puritan conscience may be clearly seen the traits of his New England forebears. But there was in his nature also much of the cordiality and warmth of affection of his more volatile mother and of the Virginia Fosters. Perry believed in the theory that sons partake of the characteristics of their mothers, and daughters of their fathers. After enumerating examples of distinguished men who were born of strong-minded women, he thus analyzes his own inheritance: "If I have any capacity or energy of character I feel that I am indebted to my mother for it. My fondness for Books & disposition to read & study must, however, have been inherited from my Father."⁵⁵

Perry was devoted to his sister and two brothers. Harriet married Davis Hunt, a "well-settled" farmer in Greenville District, and later moved to Florida, where she died, leaving a number of children. Perry wrote of her:

She was one of the purest and most amiable women I ever knew, & I loved her with all the ardor of a brothers love. She was fond of reading & had a most excellent mind as well as a noble

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁵ Autobiography, 1849, p. 6.

heart. . . . She was likewise very pretty, & [a] great belle in that remote region of country. She was addressed by a great number of very worthy & clever young men. . . . Her husband, though a very worthy man, was greatly inferior to her in intellect & character. Had she been educated properly & introduced into a higher sphere she would have been a very superior woman.⁵⁶

His two brothers became farmers in comfortable circumstances in Pendleton District, in the section that later became Oconee County. The eldest, called Foster, settled on a farm that had once belonged to his uncle Josiah Foster, on which he was still living when Perry alludes to him in 1874. All his large family of children except one son were married and "doing well"; three of his sons had moved to Texas. Josiah, Perry's younger brother, was a great favorite with him. He and his wife both died very young, leaving three orphan daughters. Perry, with his generosity of heart, educated the children and managed the estate until their marriage, when he partitioned it among them, rejoicing that it had tripled in value in the interim. He said of Josiah and Foster: "Both of my brothers were strong minded & excellent men, but without ambition or any love of learning or fondness for reading."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 15, 17.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

CHAPTER TWO

Childhood in Old Pendleton District

SOMETIME before Benjamin F. Perry had reached thirteen, his father moved from his simple home in the valley of Choestow Creek to a larger house about half a mile away on a high hill overlooking the public road. The view of the surrounding countryside was magnificent. From the front, grass-covered hillsides sloped gently to the Tugaloo River, concealed from view by a luxuriant growth of oak, hickory, and gum trees along its banks. Beyond the river rose in ever-ascending undulations the green foothills of the Blue Ridge, terminating in the northwest in the dark wooded slopes of higher ridges. In a glen several hundred yards from the house bubbled a crystal spring, which furnished the family with water. The house was situated in the fork where the clear current of Choestow Creek emptied into the rocky bed of the Tugaloo. From the rear, down the partially cleared hillsides, were visible the fertile fields of corn planted along the creek and its branches.

The dwelling was an unpainted structure of clapboards, a story and a half high, with a huge rock chimney at each end and a one-story ell jutting from the left side in the rear. A porch with a low, shingled roof extended partially across the front. The doorway led into a large and cheery living room. Between two windows at the southern end was an open rock fireplace, in which crackled four-foot logs in cold weather. On the right side of the house was a large bedroom,

with another huge fireplace. Behind the front door a narrow, winding stairway led to the two rooms of the attic story.¹

Perry has left an interesting account of his early life. The neighborhood was composed of small farmers, some of whom were very poor, whereas others owned a few slaves. They were all industrious, honest, and hospitable, raising enough on their farms to supply their humble wants. Perry never heard of any violence in the community, or of any lawsuit or criminal prosecution. It was a remote region, with not even a lawyer or doctor nearer than Pendleton village. There was a blacksmith in the neighborhood, a post office three miles away, and two country stores; Perry remembered visiting one with his mother when she carried homespun to exchange for wares. So rarely was there any travel that when a stranger did appear, he was welcomed as an overnight guest.

Perry's father was one of the most prosperous farmers of the community, owning seven or eight hundred acres of land, a good stock of horses, cattle, and hogs, and twelve or fifteen slaves. He was an indulgent master and a kindhearted neighbor. His house was a rendezvous for the poor of the community, who often came at meal time, especially on Sundays, on pretense of borrowing or returning something, and were always seated at the table and made welcome.

The neighbors helped each other in rolling logs, harvesting wheat, shucking corn, raising houses, and picking cotton, and found occasion for many "frolics" thereby. Always the cotton picking was accompanied by a quilting party. After the work was over, there was a dance and merrymaking until late in the

¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 18, 45; house described to author by Mr. J. L. Sheldon, who lives two miles away and visited it often before it burned about 1923, and by Mrs. Fannie Sheldon Kibler and Mrs. Maggie Sheldon Fellers, next-door neighbors of Mrs. Long, the last Perry descendant who lived in the home. Today only the eight-foot stone chimney on the right and some of the stone foundations of the house are still standing. To the rear, in the old garden, is the family graveyard, containing the tombs of Perry's father and mother; his brother Josiah and his wife, who lived in the home until their death; and his niece, Susan Perry (Mrs. Tom D. Long), who occupied it later. The place now belongs to Mr. Carl Myers of Oakway, but is no longer farmed; deep weeds and underbrush cover the site, and the old road in front of the house has long been abandoned. (Information from Mr. Sheldon; visit of author to scene, August 28, 1941.)

night. Christmas week was a continuous round of gaiety; the young people went from house to house, fiddling and dancing, with plenty to eat and drink. Sometimes these merrymakings were boisterous as well as jolly. One of Perry's earliest remembrances, going back to the time when he was a child of three or four years, was bursting into the bridal chamber of a neighboring cousin, early in the morning, with a crowd of hilarious young people.

Every fall there were squirrel hunts, in which two teams vied for championship. In the evening they had dinner together, with plenty of drink; the squirrels were counted, and the losing team paid for the entertainment. In the spring there were drags for shad in the Tugaloo River, with bush drags made of dogwood blossoms; sometimes at one drag five or six hundred shad were caught. The men enjoyed target matches for beef. Someone would offer a beeve to be shot for at twenty-five cents or one dollar a shot; the best shot obtained the first grades of beef, the next best the second, and so on down to the fifth, who received the hide and tallow. The men were expert marksmen, shooting at one hundred yards with a rest. As the people depended on beef when their supplies of bacon were exhausted, a shooting match was held somewhere in the neighborhood every Saturday after the crops were laid by. Often the farmers killed beeves in turn and divided them with their neighbors. Drinking to excess was common with many of the community on public occasions, but was not an everyday practice.

The people entered into the religious life of the community with wholehearted zeal. No church lay in the immediate neighborhood, but there were several eight or ten miles away. Riding on horseback, dressed in their finest attire, the young people made "going to meeting" a festive occasion; the coquettes always brought beaux home with them after the services. Now and then religious revivals were held, with wholesale baptizing of enthusiastic young people, whose enthusiasm, however, often quickly expired. The season would come when

the preacher had to turn them out of the church as fast as he took them in.²

Most of the Perry farm was planted in corn, at that time the principal crop in Pendleton District. Though cotton culture had invaded the Piedmont in the latter 1790's, it had not spread extensively in the mountain districts. Benjamin Perry was also interested in fruit and had brought back from Massachusetts grafts of choice apples, from which he developed a fine orchard. He made cider, which was drunk by the family in the fall and winter instead of water.

On this remote farm Benjamin F. Perry lived until he was sixteen. Every year he went to visit his grandmother Foster and his mother's brothers in Greenville District, fifty or sixty miles away, a journey that required two days each way. This was his only contact with the outside world, except an occasional trip to Pendleton Court House with his father, or a visit to his uncle Nathaniel Perry's about ten miles distant, or to his uncle Josiah Foster's, an equal distance away.³

From childhood Ben—as he was called—seems to have had a more spirited disposition than his brothers and sisters. His “passionate nature,” he says, was manifest from infancy and was encouraged by the indulgence he received:

Even when a child, I was fond of disputation and loved dearly the pride of victory. All children are greatly indulged by their parents, but I have a notion that I was excessively indulged. For eight years, till the birth of my younger brother, I was the baby, petted & spoilt by mother, father, brother, & sister. After that event I was cast off & had to rough it.

His mother had a way of pacifying him when he contradicted her by saying, “Let it go so there.” Though he knew she had not yielded her opinion, he regarded the concession as a victory. Since it was even easier for him to have his way with the Negroes on the farm, he delighted in associating with them. Often he slipped into the kitchen or out to the Negro cabins at night, and listened to their tales of ghosts, witches,

² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 16, 20, 35-39.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16, 117; Autobiography, 1849, p. 47.

and jack-o'-lanterns until a late hour.⁴ In return, he rehearsed to them the conversations he had heard. When eight or nine years old, during the War of 1812, he would get the *Pendleton Messenger*, the earliest newspaper of the up country, founded by John Miller from England, and read accounts of the battles to the Negroes. With them he had full sway for his proclivities for argumentation, and was told he would make a good lawyer.⁵ He delighted in this adoration. He would lie under the shade of a big walnut tree on a summer day and philosophize over his good fortune in being born white instead of black—a free man and not a slave.

During his early childhood Ben's aspirations were no higher than those of an ordinary country boy. He entered an old-field school at the age of five with his older brother and sister, but nothing in the character of his schoolmasters for several years inspired him with the least ambition for study. He much preferred setting traps for birds, hunting rabbits, playing marbles, visiting the slaves at work, or wading in the creek. He had attended school only long enough to learn a little spelling when his old drunken schoolmaster fell in the creek and was drowned. The boy regarded this as "a God send," since it released him from the study of Noah Webster. Many years afterward he observed: "If any one had at this time predicted that I would ever be fond of books and become a hard student, he would have been regarded as a false prophet by all who knew me."⁶

At the age of seven he went to another school taught by a young man, William Shannon, who was very popular but had little education. Ben continued under him for eighteen months, making some progress in spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. He walked to and from school with his sister and brother and three or four children of Matthew Hooper, their nearest neighbor, who lived about a half mile away.⁷

⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 22-23.

⁵ Journal, I, September 14, 1837. Miller started the paper as *Miller's Weekly Messenger* in 1807. (File in Wisconsin State Historical Society.)

⁶ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 22, 24-25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 7, 8.

He later wrote of Johnson Hooper, the child nearest his age: "We were great cronies, but would sometimes have fierce fights." They stayed all day at the school, having an hour or two at noon for "play time." In the winter they gathered around the fireplace that covered one entire side of the square log building, warming their cold ham and fried chicken on hickory sticks held over the fire. In summer they ate outdoors in the shade, enjoying the milk which had been kept cool in the spring. Presently the teacher would call in a stentorian voice from the doorway, "Books!" Then, relates Perry, "every one thought he must study as vigorously as he had played. We commenced saying our lessons as loud as we could bellow, and made the most discordant noise ever heard out of bedlam."

It was customary for the boys to "turn out" the teacher on Christmas Eve and July 4 and demand holiday. They barred the door, but chivalry required that he make an attempt to enter. When he had broken the door open and crossed the threshold, dozens of boys, big and little, seized him around the legs, arms, and body, and threw him to the floor, "like Lilliputians overcoming Gulliver by numbers." He was then forced to grant the holiday.

After the expiration of Shannon's school, there was no other in the community for a year or so. Then Ben resumed his studies under William Watson, "a common old field schoolmaster," for seven or eight months. Thereafter, until he was sixteen, he alternately worked on the farm and attended school. His interest in education was first awakened by an excellent teacher from Pennsylvania, a Mr. Nicholson, who tarried in the neighborhood six months before going on to the Southwest. After an interval of farm work, Ben went to live with his uncle Nathaniel's widow on Chauga Creek to attend a school run by a Mr. English, a thorough English scholar from Nova Scotia. His ambition was finally aroused; and when, after a few months, English moved on to a larger school in Franklin County, Georgia, the eager lad followed him, boarding for three months with an old Baptist deacon

named Chandler. Another period of farm work, and then he spent a few months with his uncle Robert Foster on the Saluda River in Greenville District to attend a school run by a Mr. Chalmers from Charleston, "a pretty good scholar, but a great drunkard and an intolerable liar." Here he continued his study of grammar, geography, and arithmetic.⁸

By this time Ben was sixteen years old and had been in entire control of his father's farm since he was thirteen or fourteen. His brother Foster had gone to Alabama, and his father was too old to manage the place. The task was laborious, but he stuck tenaciously to it. He thus describes his experience:

He [my father] had seven or eight working hands, & they were all idle & lazy & required constant overlooking. I worked with them every day, ploughed, hoed & did all kinds of labor on the farm. But it was sorely against my feelings & wishes. I remember frequently reflecting & thinking to myself whether such a life was worth living for. I thought it was a waste of time & that I could do better some other business, which was less laborious & slavish. But whilst I was in charge of the farm I worked like a trojan & all the neighbors praised my industry. I made fair crops, enough to supply the family wants, but not much more.⁹

During these years he learned some valuable lessons in agriculture, which he used to advantage in later years and tried to instill in others. One of the most important was the need for diversification of crops, since he saw the ruinous effect of the farmers' policy of devoting themselves almost exclusively

⁸ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 16, 27-33; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 8-9; Journal, I, September 14, 1837; S. S. Crittenden, *The Greenville Century Book* (Greenville, S. C., 1903), p. 25.

⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 40. There is a contradiction by Perry as to the exact time he finished his English education and the time he took charge of the farm. Here he states: "When I was thirteen or fourteen years old & had finished my English education, I took charge of my fathers farm & managed it entirely for two or three years." But if the intervals are counted as mentioned specifically in the Journal above, it would seem that he went to Mr. English and Mr. Chalmers after he was fourteen. Again in his Autobiography he states: "I may say that I finished my English education with old Chalmers" (Autobiography, 1874, p. 34). Thus it appears that he must have alternated work and school until he was sixteen, ■ stated in his Autobiography, 1849, p. 8.

to the planting of corn. As there was little sale for it, the farmers fed it to the numerous horses kept for the family to ride. He saw that many other improvements should be made in "the slipshod system of agriculture" followed by his father—in fertilization, methods of plowing, drainage, and care of stock. He did not manage the farm long enough to put them into effect, but rejoiced to see them later undertaken by his younger brother, Josiah, who remodeled the farm, planting cotton, which had a ready market, and other grains besides corn.

While Ben was playing the role of young overseer, he was devoting every spare moment to reading. As soon as his work was over, he sought recreation in books rather than in hunting, fishing, or other sports of the community. Reading was his consuming passion from the age of thirteen to sixteen:

I read of nights, in wet weather & Sundays, every book I could lay my hands on. . . . In coming in from my work to dinner, I always flew to my books & read them whilst waiting for my horse to eat or the dinner to be served. At night, in the winter time, I read to a late hour.¹⁰

When he made fifteen or twenty dollars in an exchange of horses, he took it to Joseph Grisham's bookstore in Pendleton and spent it all on books, purchasing histories of England, the United States, Rome, and Greece, a biography of Commodore Oliver Perry, and a book on *Manners and Customs of the World*. After devouring these, he borrowed many more from John Lee, an English bachelor who had failed in the mercantile business in Charleston and moved to the up country with a fine library. He had taken up his residence four or five miles from the Perrys', and become postmaster.¹¹ Ben made a regular trip to the post office once a week to borrow and return books, reading many of the British classics, such as the works of Shakespeare, Johnson, Goldsmith, and Addison. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* he read over and over, finding it more interesting than any novel; it gave him a permanent taste for biog-

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-46.

¹¹ *Autobiography*, 1849, pp. 9-10.

raphy. *Scottish Chiefs* was another favorite. One day as he drove along the road in an oxcart, he was so engrossed in reading Thomas's *Sketches of Man* that he did not notice that the bow had come out of the yoke until the pole of the cart fell down and one of the oxen walked away. He had to catch the ox and go back some distance to find the bow. He was delighted when his uncle Robert Foster presented him with the *American Encyclopedia* in twelve or fifteen large volumes, and he read it from beginning to end.

Inspired by the British classics, Ben began to try to write essays like the *Rambler*, *Idler*, and *Spectator*. One was a long article on "Slavery," in which the youthful moralist denounced the institution as a disgrace to republican government. He felt very strongly on the subject.¹² In his indignant protest against the institution and his desire for its gradual abolition, he voiced rather maturely the sentiment of many leading Southerners of his day—a sentiment which was to change sharply during the abolition crusade. He started with the thesis that all men are by nature "free, equal, and independent" and that God never intended for one part of mankind to be reduced "from the high and exalted state of man to a level with the brute creation." After refuting the chief arguments of the past in its favor—captivity, civil contract, and heredity—he denounced slavery as "one of the foulest infamies that ever disgraced the actions of man." An innocent people were visited by "inhuman plunderers," he declared, and crowded into the "dungeon vaults of vessels" to become the property of cruel masters across the seas.

Such was the origin of slavery in a republican Government where liberty is the boast and pride of its free citizens. How contradictory to every principle of our government and what an eternal stigma on our character as a nation is Slavery. But it is an evil and disgrace entailed on us by our ancestors. To affect an entire abolition of Slavery is a great desideratum with all the humane and philanthropic men of the present day. How this is to be done I leave to the wisdom and intelligence of our Legislators.¹³

¹² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 41, 44.

¹³ Signed "The Essayist," Perry Papers.

Of another effort, he gives an amusing account in his Autobiography:

I remember one day coming in from work black & dirty proposing to read one of my essays to my sister. She good naturedly listened to the article & then got a looking glass and held it before me saying—"I wish you to see how you look as a moral philosopher." I told her that I did not expect Dr. Johnson looked much more respectable whilst he was writing some of his essays!¹⁴

Having finished what was then called his "English education," Ben longed to study Latin and Greek and to prepare himself for a profession.¹⁵ He had determined to be something more than a tiller of the soil. He thought field work fit only for slaves and could not understand why his father and brother were so fond of it. Since early boyhood he had been interested in politics and ambitious to become a member of the legislature and Congress. Knowing that his father could not afford to educate him for a profession, he hoped that he would be able to educate himself.¹⁶

Fortunately, his uncle Robert Foster, a bachelor in comfortable circumstances,¹⁷ generously offered to advance him the money necessary for a legal education.¹⁸ There was an unusual congeniality between him and this uncle. In old age Perry wrote in his Autobiography:

But of all my friends, my uncle Robert Foster was the nearest & dearest. His kindness to me in my youth I have already mentioned. He loved me most sincerely & had the highest opinion of my talents & character. Although so much older than myself we were companions & intimate associates. He was a man of great natural talents, had read a good deal & conversed well. He was excentric, impulsive & passionate. He loved his friends dearly, & hated his enemies most ardently. Men who are cordial in their friendships are always bitter in their enmities. I went to see him very often throughout his life & we enjoyed each others society

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1874, p. 44.

¹⁵ Autobiography, 1849, p. 9.

¹⁶ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 34, 137.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁸ Autobiography, 1849, p. 9; Perry Journal, I, September 14, 1837.

very much. . . . He had the highest hopes of my success in life, & I deeply regret he did not live to see my success.¹⁹

As the career of Perry unfolds, we shall often note the similarity between his temperament and that of his uncle Robert Foster. There was much of the warmth and intensity of the Fosters in his make-up.

¹⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 225.

CHAPTER THREE

Escape from the "Prison-Farm"

IN THE FALL OF 1821 Ben Perry set out on horseback for Asheville, North Carolina, to make inquiries in regard to entering the academy there. As he passed beyond the familiar roads of old Pendleton into the lonely mountain pass, a feeling of exhilaration came over him. A strange new world seemed opening; at last his horizon had lifted beyond the narrow boundaries of the farm. He thus describes his journey:

In passing over the Saluda Mountains & Blue Ridge I was enraptured with the magnificence of the scenery, and the impression then made on my young mind by the Mountains & wildness of the country is as vivid now as if [it] had happened but yesterday. Though raised in sight of the Mountains I had never before passed over them or been amongst them. The day was cloudy. When I saw the mists and clouds rising on the sides of the Mountains, I was forcibly reminded of accounts which I had read of the eruptions of Mount Etna & Vesuvius. I was too all alone in my journey & this feeling of loneliness & fear impressed me the more strongly with the sublimity & grandness of the scenery.¹

Emerging on the ridge where Flat Rock and Hendersonville now stand, he paused to view the landscape and thought it surely the prettiest country in the world. At Colonel Patton's on the Swannanoa he made inquiries about the school and board, and then visited the academy, with which he was much pleased. He returned home to make preparations, and in January, 1822, returned over the mountains, carrying a pair of saddlebags stuffed with clothes. A half century later the experience was still vivid in his memory:

¹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 47.

There never was a happier or prouder being in the world than I was. Bright hopes & visions filled my imagination. I thought, in my boyish and vainglorious mood, that I had capacity enough to make a figure in the world! I determined to try at least. And I congratulated myself on escaping out of my prison-farm, where I had felt, for the last two or three years, like a bird in a cage. I was now free.²

He boarded with the principal of the Asheville Academy, Francis H. Porter, a Presbyterian clergyman, and entered upon the study of Greek and Latin as if he could master the whole field of classical literature within a single year. Studying sixteen hours a day, in one week he memorized a Latin grammar. The next week Porter placed him in the class with his son, who, even though he had been studying Latin six months, could not keep up with Ben. The eager scholar was then placed in a class alone, and in eight months had passed all the classes in the school, some of which had been studying the languages three years. He had covered a long list of classical works: *Historia Sacra*, *Viri Romae*, Caesar, Cicero's orations, Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Bucolics*, Horace, Greek grammar, John and the Acts of the Apostles in Greek, *Graeca Minora* and *Graeca Majora*. He later regretted that his teacher allowed him to rush through these books, obtaining merely a knowledge of the translation and nothing of their beauty and philosophy. He forgot his Greek and Latin as easily as he had acquired it.³

In the May vacation Ben made a trip home, alternately riding and walking part of the way with one of his fellow-students, J. F. E. Hardy, who had procured a horse. After they parted, he took his saddlebags on his shoulder and walked about fifteen miles through the Gap Creek to his uncle Robert Foster's. After a rest of a day or two, he borrowed a horse and returned to his father's, where he was overjoyed to greet the family, the servants, and his dogs.

On his return to Asheville he began boarding with Dr.

² Autobiography, 1874, p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 9-10.

Swain, father of his friend and fellow-student, David L. Swain, a fine classical scholar about twenty years of age, who went on to Raleigh soon afterwards to read law. Two daughters in the family, Althea and Mary, several years older than Ben, took it upon themselves to educate him socially, introducing him to their friends and taking him on their walks and boat rides. Perry wrote long afterward:

When these kind & good young ladies first took me in hand I was as scarery in female company as a wild colt, certainly not bridle wise. But they soon tamed me & made me as gentle as a cooing dove . . . and under their patronage I made as rapid strides in gallantry as I had in the Roman and Grecian classics. . . . I was never afterwards shy or diffident in the company of young ladies. But on the contrary became a devoted admirer & lover of them all my life.⁴

He was especially fond of Mary, who corresponded with him for several years after he left Asheville.⁵

Besides training in the classics and social graces, Ben for the first time in his life received religious instruction. He boarded in the homes of two very devout families, where prayers were held night and morning. In his own home his mother and father had "never made any professions of religion, but never breathed a word against it."⁶ In later years he wrote:

Although my parents were moral upright & honorable in every sense of the word & endowed by nature with all the Christian virtues of love, charity & kindness, they never associated themselves with any church. There were several meeting houses or churches in the neighborhood which they attended regularly on Sunday till quite advanced in life. My father read his Bible constantly in his old age, but I never knew what was his religious belief.

Perry had read the Bible as a youth of thirteen and fourteen, and had been delighted with many parts of it. He and his sister had regularly accompanied their mother and father

⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 49-52.

⁵ Mary Swain to Perry, December 18, 1823, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

⁶ Autobiography, 1849, p. 11.

to church, riding on horseback, while their parents rode in an old gig.⁷ But, like his father, he never became a member of any church, though he was a regular attendant most of his life. In mature manhood he wrote of his Asheville experience: "I had, perhaps, deeper religious feelings than I ever had before, or have entertained since. This was owing to my religious associations & to my age."⁸

Perry was innately sociable, and the warmth of his nature and steadiness of his character made him cling with tenacity to those in whom he found congeniality of spirit. Such a friend was David L. Swain, with whom he carried on a life-long correspondence, though they did not meet again until Swain, who had meanwhile been governor of North Carolina and president of the University of North Carolina, visited Columbia in 1852 while Perry was in the state legislature. Perry shared his hotel room and bed with his old friend, whom he considered a remarkable man—like Chancellor Harper, he said, "in the simplicity of his character and the purity and greatness of his intellect."⁹ Other academy companions with whom he remained intimate through life were Hardy, who became an Asheville physician,¹⁰ and Montraville Patton.¹¹

In the fall of 1822 Ben returned home with a letter to his father from Mr. Porter commending in the highest terms his "moral demeanor," "arduous and unremitting" application to study, and rapid progress while in the academy.¹² The winter months he devoted to reviewing Latin and Greek and to reading miscellaneous works. Having cleared thirty-five dollars in an exchange of horses with his brother, he went to Pendleton and spent it all on histories and biographies. His bachelor friend, John Lee, had returned to England, but had left his

⁷ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 14, 41-42.

⁸ Autobiography, 1849, p. 11.

⁹ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 9, 1852.

¹⁰ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 129, 221; J. F. E. Hardy to Perry, June 25, July 2, 1835, Perry Papers.

¹¹ M. Patton to Perry, October 15, 1824, February 17, May 27, 1825, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

¹² Francis H. Porter to Benjamin Perry, October 2, 1822, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

books with his sister, Mrs. Dench, formerly head of the Female Academy at Pendleton, who gladly lent them to Ben. He secured others from an old Scotchman, Duncan McKenzie, who lived on his father's place and was very fond of reading.¹³

II

Shortly before this there had been established in Greenville, South Carolina, through subscription, male and female academies which acquired such a high reputation that they attracted boarding students from other districts of the up country. Vardry McBee, who owned much of the land on which Greenville now stands, had generously deeded thirty acres adjoining the village to the trustees, and forty-nine other citizens had subscribed \$5,000 for erection of buildings.¹⁴ Perry, having heard of the Male Academy, decided to enter it to read the *Iliad* and pursue mathematics and natural philosophy under the Reverend Mr. Hodges.

Thus, in the spring of 1823 he went to Greenville,¹⁵ which, except for a few months the following winter, was to be his lifelong residence thereafter. The beautiful mountain village, nestling in a verdant valley in the foothills of the Blue Ridge, with the peaks of Paris Mountain, the Table Rock, and Caesar's Head in the distance, completely captivated him. A young poet, visiting the scene for the first time a few months later, was entranced with the "majestic Saluda Mountains, whose summits pierced the clouds—the shadowy valleys, the quietly flowing Reedy River, and the grand old Table Rock—saying nothing of the quiet little town embedded, as it were, among the green hills; for, from a distance, with its white cottages, it looked like a pearl set in a cluster of emeralds."¹⁶ The village was laid out on the eastern bank of Reedy River, just where the Reedy River Falls tumbled over a cliff of ragged

¹³ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 53-54.

¹⁴ Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁵ Autobiography, 1874, p. 54; Perry Journal, I, 4.

¹⁶ "An Old Man of Four Score" to Editor of *Greenville Daily News*, February 4, 1882, Perry Scrap Book (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina).

rocks, to meander onward between banks shaded with a thick growth of Camperdown elms.¹⁷ From the river northward stretched the unpaved Main Street, with a two-story log courthouse in its center. A block to the east, in the center of Court Street, stood a three-story jail. The village presented a charming rural aspect; the streets were covered with grass, and handsome trees grew here and there.¹⁸

Greenville had been laid out as "Pleasantburg" in 1797, when it was made the county seat, but from the first it was called "Greenville" from the county, which had presumably been named for General Nathanael Greene, though some older citizens insisted that it derived its appellation from its verdant appearance.¹⁹ Greenville County had been created in 1786, being one of the counties carved from the Cherokee cession of 1777. From 1800 until 1868 the counties were called districts.²⁰

The first known white settler in what is now the city of Greenville was Richard Pearis, of Virginia, who had married a Cherokee squaw and established a corn mill and Indian trading post at Reedy River Falls about 1765. When he became a Tory in the Revolution, his establishment was destroyed by the patriots, and he was run out of the district, ending his days on a British land grant in the Bahamas. His Greenville estate was bought in 1788 by Lemuel J. Allston, originally of North Carolina, who had made other extensive purchases on Reedy River and who continued acquiring property until he owned 11,028 acres. The village of Pleasantburg was laid out on his estate, and a plat made of fifty-two lots for sale, comprising four blocks on each side of Main Street from the river to the present Washington Street. The lots did not sell very rapidly, however; and in 1815 Vardry McBee of Lincolnton, North Carolina, in turn purchased Allston's remaining land, including his large mansion at the end of

¹⁷ Mary C. Simms Oliphant, "The Genesis of an Up-Country Town," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1933, pp. 56-57.

¹⁸ Autobiography, 1849, p. 73; "Diary of Edward Hooker," *loc. cit.*, p. 898.

¹⁹ Oliphant, "The Genesis of an Up-Country Town," *loc. cit.*, pp. 56-58.

²⁰ David D. Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 167, 460; III, 256, 505.

McBee Avenue, "Prospect Hill," which he rented for several years to Edmund Waddell.

This mountainous village was to hold a unique place in the economic and political life of the state and to become the stronghold of unionism during the period of sectional conflict. Economically, it depended partly on the summer visitors from the low country, who sought the healthful and invigorating climate of Greenville as a retreat from their malaria-ridden plantations. Waddell opened the Allston mansion as the first regular hotel and made a fortune.²¹ Colonel William Toney built the "Mansion House" on the northwest corner of Court House square in 1824, a hotel famous for years as a resort for the wealthy plantation owners of the low country. It was an imposing brick building with floors of heart pine, a tin roof, and circular stairs. The parlor on the ground floor, extending the whole depth of the building, was so large that it required a fireplace at each end of the room.²² On the northeast corner of the square, opposite the "Mansion House," was the "Greenville Hotel," run by Dr. John Crittenden.²³

Another factor in the prosperity of Greenville was its thriving trade with the Tennessee and Kentucky drovers who passed through the district for fifty or sixty miles on their way to Charleston and Augusta, furnishing the farmers a good market for their corn, fodder, and other foodstuffs. Perry reports having seen three or four droves of hogs, containing several hundred each, and almost as many horses, mules, and cattle pass through the village every day during the fall season. The Western trade also built up the mercantile establishments and mechanic shops in the village. Thus Greenville

²¹ Oliphant, "The Genesis of an Up-Country Town," *loc. cit.*, pp. 50-59; Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, pp. 12-16, 20-22, 27-28. "Prospect Hill" stood where the Greenville Junior High School is located today. (Conversation of author with old citizens of Greenville.)

²² Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, p. 34. After standing for over a century, most of the building was torn down to make way for the Poinsett Hotel. A narrow strip, however, containing the arched doorway, with fan-shaped glass, that led into the old Mansion House office now forms two small stores. (C. A. David, "Greenville of Old," in David Scrap Book [Mr. Louis David, Greenville, S. C.], information to author from old residents of Greenville.)

²³ "An Old Man of Four Score," *loc. cit.*

District, with its diversified activities, furnished a contrast with the low-country districts, which were devoted almost entirely to cotton or rice culture under slave labor. As in the other mountain districts of Pendleton, Anderson, and Spartanburg, the population during the ante-bellum period was predominantly white; the farms were mostly small, worked by an independent yeomanry, sometimes with the assistance of a few slaves.²⁴

Not only did the up country and the low country differ sharply in their economic life, but they showed an even wider contrast in their social life. Greenville in 1823 was still a rude frontier village, whereas the old towns of the low country had long been accustomed to wealth, refinement, and a rich intellectual life. Perry's description of Greenville as he first saw it is illuminating:

I remember the first day I reached Greenville. I saw two drunken blackguards throwing stones at each other, on the Public Square, cursing & abusing each other with gross epithets for several hours! It was customary for the young men of the village & the old ones also to meet in the piazas of the Stores, & sometimes on the side walks of the Streets, & play cards all the morning or evening, drinking in the mean time toddy, which was very often placed in front of them on the table at which they were playing. I have seen thus situated Chancellor Thompson, Judge Earle, Col. Toney, Captain Cleveland, Warren R. Davis & others. Playing cards was the chief amusement of the village. There was very little business of any character to occupy the people & scarcely any of them thought of spending their time in reading.

He goes on to describe the simplicity of the household furnishings:

Col. Toney had, in his drawing room an old sofa, which was afterwards purchased by Captain Cleveland, and which I am sure was the only one in the village, till General Thompson moved up from Edgefield. In the sitting room of Captain Cleveland, who

²⁴ B. F. Perry, "Reminiscences of the County of Greenville," *Greenville Enterprise*, September 27, 1871; Schaper, "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 299-323, 384-390.

was the wealthiest man in the District, there were split bottom chairs made in the country, two old tables & a book case with fifteen or twenty volumes in it.

There was only one carriage in the village, an old vehicle belonging to Colonel Toney, and, so far as Perry knew, only one other in the whole district—that of Judge Thompson. The village had only two pianos, and silver spoons were almost as rare. As for dress, Captain Cleveland, one of the most prominent men of the district, never wore a coat in summer except when he went to church or rode out of the village, and even then seldom wore stockings. Colonel Toney was more particular in his dress, and “affected to be somewhat of a dandy, wearing pumps & silk stockings & a calicoe morning gown or hunting shirt in hot weather.”

In 1823 the population was only about five hundred. There were two physicians, Dr. Richard Harrison and Dr. William Robinson, who, however, had little practice, as many had never taken a dose of medicine; and three lawyers—Baylis Earle, Tandy Walker, and William Choice. The three or four stores all kept liquor for sale, so that “a lady going in to one of them to shop, would very likely meet a drunken fellow cursing or quarrelling over his half pint.” Coupled with the drunkenness was much lawlessness.

On public occasions it was customary for the people of the country to come into the village, hitch their horses to the fences, get drunk, strip in the streets and fight. It was a rare thing for a Sale-day to pass over without a fight in the Streets. During court week, the ginger cake waggons camped on the public square, built light-wood fires & cook[ed] their suppers. The greater part of the night there were noises & carousing in the streets. The Country girls all came to court, & on Tuesdays I have seen as many women as men in the Court yard. Horse racing was common too on sale days & during court week.²⁵

But as the years passed, the rudeness of the frontier departed, and the romantic little village changed into an indus-

²⁵ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 73-76.

trialized city. Perry's life became interwoven with that of Greenville—the study of one is almost the study of the other.

Ben boarded with Captain William Wickliffe while attending the Greenville Academy. He and his roommate, James Wright, "a very worthy young man of fine appearance & manners," joined a debating club and used to practice in their room "by addressing the candle as President," occasionally becoming so vociferous that they were heard in the streets. James afterwards went to West Point, corresponding with Ben frequently until, having always been of a melancholy disposition, he blew his brains out after graduation. There were other boys at the academy with whom Perry developed a lifelong friendship: Randell and Theodore Croft, who later became physicians in Greenville; Elias D. Earle, a talented boy who, however, afterwards became dissipated and misanthropic; William Thompson, son of Chancellor Thompson; and George F. Townes, a future lawyer, editor, and politician of Greenville.

Under the Reverend Mr. Hodges, Ben was prepared for the junior class of South Carolina College, where he wanted to spend two years before beginning the study of law. But this was not to be. Although his uncle Robert offered to furnish the necessary funds, Perry saw that he could not afford it and declined. He thought at the time that reading law might be just as advantageous to him, but ever afterwards regretted his decision.²⁶ Returning to his father's in the fall of 1823, he spent the winter in a course of reading which would assist him in the study of law. He read a number of histories and tried to improve his style by composing articles in imitation of Johnson, whose works he greatly admired. He also wrote many letters to his old schoolmates at Asheville and Greenville.²⁷ It was his last stay for any length of time in the home of his childhood.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 54-55, 220, 222.

²⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 12.

CHAPTER FOUR

Education in Law and Politics

ON MARCH 4, 1824, Ben Perry entered the office of Baylis J. Earle, of Greenville, for a three-year course in the study of law. Earle was solicitor of the Western circuit and, according to Perry, "stood at the head of his Profession in the upper country." He had been graduated from South Carolina College with first honors at the age of sixteen; he was "a high-minded and honorable gentleman, but proud & austere in his manners & deportment." Of strikingly handsome appearance, modest demeanor, and literary tastes, he won the affection of his pupil, and their mutual regard survived later political differences.¹

Earle's office was a little building, ten feet by fifteen, of only one room, that stood on the lot where the First Baptist Church now stands. It contained much the largest library in the circuit, consisting of two or three hundred law books and about the same number of miscellaneous volumes. Since Earle was seldom in his office and there was no other student, Ben was all alone with his books. With his usual avidity, he started devouring the legal tomes. The first volume of Blackstone's *Commentaries* he read "as rapidly & as constantly as if [I] had been reading a novel." After several days he remarked to Tandy Walker that he had found so far very little law in Blackstone. He had expected to find it similar to Grimke's *Justices of the Peace*, which he had previously read. "There was too much of theory & too little of practice to suit my taste," writes Perry. "A code of laws would have been more agreeable

¹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 56; Autobiography, 1849, p. 16.

to me." Walker repeated the remark and caused amusement at Perry's expense.²

Earle did not examine his pupil once during the whole three years he was reading in his office. He was absent on the circuit most of the time, and besides "had no relish for the *tedium* of an examination even when in his office & unemployed."³ Of his studies Perry wrote many years later:

I read too much, too fast, & too constantly to remember . . . like pouring water into a sifter. . . . I soon acquired the reputation of being a very hard student. I read almost sixteen hours every day. I rose early in the morning & read law till dinner, then I read history and biography 'till night, and after supper read novels, plays, poetry, periodicals, & newspapers. I spent no time in society or idleness.⁴

The bent of Perry's mind and the direction of his interests were easily manifest at this early stage of his career. It was not the theoretical side of law with which he was concerned; it was the practical. Distinctly, his interests were political; he was concerned with men and affairs, not with abstractions. Though pursuing the study of law assiduously, reading every elementary law book in Judge Earle's library, and going over Blackstone's *Commentaries* again and again, he says of his work: "I found the study of law dry and uninteresting, & only persevered so intensely from a sense of duty. It was always with delight that I threw down my law books & took up a history or biographical work."

Since he was borrowing all his funds from his uncle Robert, Ben lived as economically as possible. He furnished one of the jury rooms at the courthouse as his bedchamber, and boarded at Crittenden's Hotel on the corner across the square, paying only one hundred dollars a year for his meals. He hired one of the hotel servants to make his fires, cut his wood, and take care of his room at a cost of ten or twelve dollars during the year, paid one dollar per month for washing, and

² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 56-57.

³ Autobiography, 1849, p. 13.

⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 57, 59.

managed to dress "genteely" for a hundred dollars a year. There were only three other regular boarders at Crittenden's Hotel: Earle, Tandy Walker, and Dr. William Robinson. On sales day and court week a few people stopped at the hotel, but most of those who came to the village hitched their horses to the trees and fences and returned home in the evening. The members of the bar generally stayed at Crittenden's while court was in session. During the summer and fall the hotel was well patronized by visitors from the lower parts of South Carolina and Georgia.⁵ Perry's association with these cultured guests was of great service to one who "had been brought up so much out of society."⁶ The "Mansion House" across the street was supported almost entirely by summer visitors who were seeking health and pleasure in the mountains.

Ben was still interested in public speaking, and persuaded the young men of the village to form a debating club, which held public meetings in the courthouse. The presence of young ladies often stimulated the debaters to their best efforts. One of the principal members was John Bale, a small, ungainly English mechanic who kept a little shop and made wagons. He had a pleasant voice and used sensible arguments.⁷ Waddy Thompson and Tandy Walker also "poured out their streams of sparkling eloquence at its meetings."⁸ Perry took his turn in the debating tilts. For one of his arguments in 1824, he was taken to task in later years. The question was whether Jackson or John Quincy Adams should be President, and Perry spoke in favor of Adams, denouncing Jackson as unfit for the Presidency, "being nothing more than a military chieftan, always dangerous to a Republic."⁹

Perry was also an enthusiastic member of the "Franklin Polemic Society," a more formal organization devoted especially to oratory. Soon after his arrival in Greenville, he ap-

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

⁶ Autobiography, 1849, p. 15.

⁷ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 59-61.

⁸ "An Old Man of Four Score" to Editor of *Greenville Daily News*, February 4, 1882, Perry Scrap Book.

⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 138.

peared before the society in a flowery oration commemorating its second anniversary. Later disquisitions on "Law," "Government," and the "Constitution" attest the assiduity of his study of political science.

An oration delivered before the society on "The Origin, Nature & Principles of Civil Government" on September 15, 1827, shows a growing maturity in both thought and expression. After tracing the history of governments through the stages of monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny, and democracy, Perry asserted: "But among the variety of governments which ever have existed, that of these United States stands preeminent for the virtue of its Constitution, and the freedom of its laws."

He stated an idea of that government which was fundamentally opposed to the state sovereignty view. The people, he said, had delegated power to their representatives, but had retained supreme power themselves by framing a Constitution to govern their legislators; and, by that Constitution, an independent judiciary had been established to determine the legality of all legislative proceedings.

In the same speech he stated another principle that was to govern his future action: that when a man is elected by the suffrage of his fellow citizens, "nothing should deter him from acting boldly and independently. Having been chosen for his superior abilities, he should be guided entirely by his own judgement formed after mature reflection. The will of his constituents ought never to control him in public legislation, when contrary to what he knows to be correct and proper."¹⁰

In the summer of 1825, Ben was unexpectedly selected by a public meeting to deliver the Fourth of July oration in the village. The meeting had been proposed by John H. Hewitt, a young poet and musician from New York who had charge of the music department of the Female Academy. He was a graduate of West Point and "a great beau with the ladies." Some of the young men, suspecting that he had instigated the meeting to have himself elected orator of the day, determined to mortify him and elected Perry instead by a vote of about

¹⁰ Perry Papers.

thirty to eight. Perry then selected Hewitt to read the Declaration of Independence on the occasion. Feeling fully the responsibility placed upon him by the young gallants of the village, Ben put forth his supreme effort in both thought and style. Looking back on it many years later, he considered it a "puerile sophomoric production," but at any rate his flowery and extravagant utterances were well received by the ladies, and his feelings greatly gratified.

Fifty years later Perry thus describes the culmination of his triumph:

As I came down from the stand, with the oration in my hand, I went up to speak to Miss Caroline Thompson, the daughter of Chancellor Thompson, who was the reigning belle of our town at that time, & a most intelligent & amiable young lady. She said it was well for me to take care of the manuscript or some of the young ladies might steal it. Thereupon I presented it to her & asked if she would honor me by accepting it. She graciously received it, and I now hope burnt it, for I am sure I should be ashamed to see it, or know that any one else had read it.¹¹

The young law student also found an outlet for his talents in writing articles for the earliest journals that appeared in Greenville. Hewitt persuaded a printer, W. C. Young, to purchase "an old Ramage press and a font of much battered type" and established a literary periodical in Greenville. Over fifty years later he wrote a letter to the editor of the Greenville *Daily News* describing his editorial venture. He called the journal the *Ladies' Literary Portfolio*, stating that it was the first paper ever printed in the neighborhood of the Saluda Mountain range. "It contained," wrote Hewitt, "spicy editorials, essays, tales, and poetry; but it was only looked upon as a literary *bijou*." It did not appear regularly and after the first volume was superseded by the Greenville *Republican*,¹² a weekly newspaper, which thus expressed its regret when Hewitt's paper was discontinued: "It was a little work that pleased our community, more from its *light* nature, than from

¹¹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 62; rough draft of speech in Perry Papers.

¹² "A Peep in the Past," Perry Scrap Book.

its solidity."¹³ Ben tried his hand at writing tales and love stories for the *Ladies' Literary Portfolio*; but since his aspirations were mostly political, he was a more enthusiastic contributor to the *Republican*.¹⁴

The Greenville *Republican* was started by Messrs. Young and Timme on July 12, 1826, and was issued every Wednesday morning. In September the publishers announced that they had engaged as editor Charles W. D'Oyley, who began his work on October 14. The last of the month the office of the *Republican* was removed from the house between Colonel Toney's and Captain Wickliffe's, fronting the courthouse, to an upstairs room over Wickliffe's store; the partnership was dissolved, and W. C. Young became sole publisher, D'Oyley remaining editor.¹⁵ Perry welcomed the establishment of a regular newspaper in Greenville. "I had had all my life an itching for scribbling," he writes, "& now an opportunity offered for me to gratify my ambition in that way, & keep my light from being hid under a bushel."¹⁶

By this time Perry had formulated his political principles very clearly, having arrived at his opinions by an independent study of political pamphlets and treatises from the days of his boyhood. In 1832 he wrote in his Journal:

I think Mr. McDuffie an honest politician. But both he and Mr. Calhoun have abandoned their former opinions on the powers of the Federal and State Governments. My first notions on the subject of state rights and the powers of the General Government were obtained from Mr. McDuffies Essays and Mr. Calhouns speeches. On this subject my opinion has undergone no change.¹⁷

In his Autobiography of 1874 he gives an interesting account of the development of his political creed:

I had read, when a boy, McDuffies "One of the People," and from that very able & masterly pamphlett I imbibed a prejudice

¹³ January 6, 1827.

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 14. Perry erroneously gives the date 1825 for the appearance of the *Republican*. Vol. I, No. 1 appeared July 12, 1826.

¹⁵ Greenville *Republican*, September 30, October 14, 28, December 16, 1826.

¹⁶ Autobiography, 1874, p. 63.

¹⁷ "Sketch of My Life," Journal, I, 9.

against the popular clamor of the day for "States Rights," which clung to me through life, till after the civil war, when I saw all the constitutional rights of the States trampled in the dust by the Federal Congress & President. . . . I had read the *Federalist* most attentively & concurred heartily in all the views therein expressed, with regard to the powers of the States & the Federal Government under the Constitution. I was in favor of a strong Federal Government, capable of protecting itself at home & abroad. In these views I was sustained at that time by Mr. Calhoun, Governor McDuffie, Judge Butler, Judge Prioleau & Governor Hamilton. But a sudden change came over the State & all of these gentlemen acquiesced in the change. I remained steadfast in the faith of my youth.¹⁸

Throughout his career, Perry referred to the *Federalist* and to Washington's *Farewell Address* as the criteria of his political views. While in the state legislature in 1853, he was engaged in conversation with Mr. Woodward of Charleston on the subject of state rights and consolidation, and was startled when Woodward claimed Alexander Hamilton as a state rights man, referring Perry to the *Federalist* for confirmation. "I replied," wrote Perry from Columbia, "the *Federalist* was our political Bible, and contained, in our opinion, the best and only true construction of the Federal Constitution, and the relative rights of the States and Congress."¹⁹ By 1826 his mind was likewise "fully imbued with the value of the Federal Union, as set forth in Washington's Farewell Address."²⁰

Perry's first attempt at political journalism appeared in the third issue of the *Republican*, in an article on "State Rights" signed "Junius." It was a reply to William Smith's resolutions on the subject in the South Carolina House.²¹ Smith, a wealthy planter, had been ahead of public opinion in South Carolina in advocating state rights, while McDuffie in Congress and Calhoun as cabinet member and Vice-President had held broad construction views, supporting the protective tariff and internal improvement measures. Smith, through Calhoun's in-

¹⁸ Pp. 63-64.

¹⁹ Editorial Correspondence, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 1, 1853.

²⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 139.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

fluence, had been defeated for the Senate in 1822 because of his extreme views; but by 1825 South Carolina, alarmed by the tariff movement, was ready to support state rights. The change is attributable to the economic decline following the emigration of many people to the Southwest, where the spread of cotton and rice plantations caused a drastic reduction in the prices of these commodities and a hopeless depression in the seaboard states. Blaming the protective tariff, the South Carolina legislature, therefore, passed Smith's resolutions in 1825, denying the right of Congress to tax the citizens of one state for roads and canals in another state and condemning the protective tariff as unconstitutional.²²

"Junius" claimed that the term "state rights" meant the rights of the *people* of the states and not of the *legislatures*, and that only the *people* had a right to dictate to their representatives either in the Federal or state legislatures. He therefore denounced the action of the legislature in attempting to control the proceedings of Congress; it was an infringement on the rights of the people, and "truly a presumptuous act." The people of South Carolina, he said, had expressed their belief in the constitutional power of Congress to adopt a system of internal improvements by re-electing all their representatives who voted for it. He closed with an indignant note:

The members of our legislature have not only assumed power which does not belong to them; but . . . men of no experience in legislation, and some of whom perhaps never read the constitution attentively, have made pretensions to greater wisdom than Clay, Webster, and M'Duffie, in the construction of constitutions!

The article by "Junius" was rebutted by "A" in the Yorkville *Encyclopedia*, and a running contest was kept up by the two writers for several months in the columns of the *Republican*.²³ The identity of "A" is not known, but evidently he was another young political aspirant. Perry later said of this journalistic battle: "I was silly enough to believe that the

²² Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 418-425.

²³ Greenville *Republican*, July 26, September 16, October 28, 1826.

writer was Judge Smith himself, the States Rights chieftan of South Carolina. This flattered my vanity exceedingly, & I continued to write on the subject & keep up a controversy with this writer in York."²⁴ "A" argued that the legislature should sound the alarm at the approach of danger, but Junius thundered back that the people should keep a watchful eye over their public servants, "and purge the Legislature of cunning intriguing politicians, who would fain drive them into the gulph of anarchy to promote their own interests."

In the next round, "A" accused his antagonist of "vanity and presumption," and Perry strongly defended the constitutionality of the power of Congress to adopt internal improvements. He argued the Hamiltonian doctrine of implied powers, stating that the right to make roads and canals was derived from the enumerated powers given Congress: to "establish Post Offices and post Roads" and to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States." At this early stage of his political career, Perry was in accord with Clay and other nationalists on internal improvements. He even refuted the statement of "A" that internal improvements should be carried on by the state governments instead of the national lest the interests of one part of the Union be promoted at the expense of the other. Perry argued that every part would be benefited in time. In this same letter to "A" he expressed a view of the tariff which he was always to maintain:

I am no tariff man—I do not believe in the policy of it—I consider it ruinous to the southern States—I am not of the opinion that it will be beneficial to the nation at large; but still I cannot disbelieve the right of Congress to lay taxes for anything it sees proper. If that body has power to lay taxes for one thing, it has for another. The levying a tax cannot be unconstitutional; but the appropriation of the money afterwards may.²⁵

A few years later, however, Perry had completely reversed his ideas on internal improvements. He had probably noted

²⁴ Autobiography, 1874, p. 139.

²⁵ September 16, October 28, 1826.

the detrimental effects on the South of the alignment of East and West for Clay's "American System." In a speech before the Franklin Polemic Society, he now took the same stand that he had vigorously condemned in Judge Smith. Congress, he stated, had no power under the Constitution to adopt a system of internal improvements. Though admitting the beneficial effect of such a system from both "a commercial and political point of view," he thought it should be carried on by the states and not by the general government. He proceeded in a forcible argument to take up the clauses in the Constitution under which the nationalists claimed this power, and to refute them one by one.²⁶

The young law student was also formulating his ideas on reforms in the state government and already beginning his crusade for them in the columns of the *Republican*. He wrote an essay on "Free Suffrage," which was attacked by Hewitt, and a lively controversy ensued. Perry contended that all men are interested in the government under which they live and therefore should have some share in legislation; that the man with a fortune is endowed with no more "wisdom and integrity" than the man "not worth a cent." Hewitt insisted that irresponsible men should not have the privilege of appointing legislators who might endanger the property of men of wealth and integrity. Perry was willing to concede payment of a poll tax as a qualification for suffrage, but was firm in his belief in the capability of all men in the United States to govern themselves.²⁷

Advocacy of extension of the suffrage was only one point in Perry's program for democratization of the government of the state. Having been reared in the simple society of the up-country frontier, he valued men for their character rather than their wealth, education, or polished manners. Like Andrew Jackson, he thought the people were inherently honest and trustworthy, and that when they went wrong, it was generally because they had been misled by scheming politicians.

²⁶ Perry Papers, n.d.

²⁷ August 2, 12, 1826.

He strongly advocated more popular control in the government. In 1826 he published an article in the *Republican* urging amendment of the state constitution to have presidential electors elected by the people. Such was the original intention of the Constitutional Convention, he claimed, which gave the appointment of electors to the states, leaving only the manner of appointment to the state legislatures, which had then assumed the power themselves. "With me it has ever been an axiom in politics," he wrote, "that the people should delegate no power which they can judiciously exercise without too great inconvenience to themselves." They were fully capable of judging the merits of a president. "Neither are the people the ignorant herd which some would pretend to believe them; but have always showed their willingness and capacity to reward talents and merit. The statesmen and orators in Congress are convincing proofs of this."²⁸

His trust in the popular judgment extended to the point of advocating more popular control over judges. He objected to their being elected by the legislature for life, asserting that it rendered them irresponsible to the people and that they might become superannuated and incompetent. The proper remedy, he urged, was periodical elections for a term of five or eight years. He also wrote an article on "The Trial by Jury," showing its defects. It was ridiculous to require unanimity of opinion of twelve men, he said. Why not have a majority of twenty-three men? Also, another grave defect was the method of empaneling jurors. Being drawn from the body of the people, they might be "as ignorant and stupid as asses," but would still have to sit as arbiters of the most intricate facts. The judge, therefore, had too much power and often practically decided the case. As for the remedy, jurors might be appointed by the sheriff or elected by the people for one or two years, though there were dangers in each method.²⁹

But the most constructive reform advocated by Perry was codification of the common law. Under the pseudonym

²⁸ "The Constitution," August 26, 1826.

²⁹ September 2, November 4, 1826.

"Philo" he wrote a series of articles on "Codification" in the *Republican* shortly after his admission to the bar. He refuted the contention of those who regarded the "pruning, simplifying, and reducing our laws to a code" as impracticable by citing the success of Justinian, Napoleon, and the state of Louisiana in codifying laws. How superior a judicious code would be to the common law! The one was "certain and invariable," the other intangible. He pointed out some of the absurdities of the common law in South Carolina which proved its origin with a rude and savage people: more than thirty crimes were capitally punished; the greatest crimes and petty offenses were in many instances punished with equal severity, whereas other offenses infinitely more injurious were scarcely punished at all. How astonishing that a people so wise and virtuous as those in the United States, and so progressive in war and politics, should have laws instituted more than a thousand years ago by Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans! How could crude ancients form laws suited to moderns? It was very important for citizens to be acquainted with the laws, but even lawyers could hardly be familiar with such a confused and absurd system.³⁰

In the fall of 1826, while still a law student at Greenville, Perry met John C. Calhoun, of whose talents, patriotism, and purity he had held "a most exalted notion" since childhood. As a schoolboy of sixteen at Asheville, in 1822, he had written an article advocating Calhoun's claims to the presidency in preference to all his rivals—Adams, Clay, Crawford, and Jackson.³¹ "I was in favor of him," Perry explains in his Autobiography, "because he was a South Carolinian, had taken a high position in Congress during the war with Great Britain, had administered the War Department as Secretary of War with signal ability, and was acknowledged by all to be a man of distinguished talents."³² Only a few years were to elapse

³⁰ May 12, 19, 26, June 9, 1827.

³¹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 55. Perry gives the date 1825, but 1826 is verified by *Greenville Republican*, October 7, 1826; Perry to Henry H. Townes, September 25, 1826, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

³² Autobiography, 1874, p. 138.

before Calhoun completely reversed his position and assumed the intellectual leadership of the extreme state rights party of his state, while Perry and the district of Greenville joined the unionist forces against him.

At this time, however, Greenville welcomed the news of the arrival of the Vice-President at Pendleton, which he had recently chosen as his permanent residence. Pendleton and Greenville districts were in the same congressional district, and though later at dagger's point politically, were now united in their admiration of Calhoun. The citizens of Pendleton gave a dinner in his honor, and on September 13 the citizens of Greenville and its vicinity passed resolutions to invite him to a dinner and ball. Perry was on the committee of arrangements. Calhoun accepted for September 29, at which time a numerous company partook of "a sumptuous and elegant Dinner" at the Mansion House, presided over by Waddy Thompson.³³

Perry wrote the toast which was drunk to Calhoun at the dinner: "*John C. Calhoun Vice President of the United States*—Alike distinguished for his great talents, and faithful political services. A nation's gratitude his just reward."³⁴ Calhoun, acknowledging the compliment, offered a toast in reply: "*The Village of Greenville*—Picturesque and lovely in its situation, may it so prosper as to be worthy of the memory of him whose illustrious name it bears." Many other toasts were drunk, among them one to "Internal Improvement." Perry offered one which showed his leaning toward democratic reform: "*Power in Government*—None should be delegated which can be properly exercised by the People." On this point also, he was soon to come into conflict with the followers of Calhoun, who were determined to continue the control of the state by the aristocratic minority. No ripple disturbed the

³³ *Greenville Republican*, September 16, October 7, 1826. The Calhouns had spent several summers at Clergy Hall, the estate of Mrs. Calhoun's mother near Pendleton, which they now rented permanently and later purchased, changing its name to Fort Hill (Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun: Nationalist, 1782-1828*, New York, 1944, pp. 268, 315, 342).

³⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 55.

harmonious gaiety of this occasion, however, which ended in a splendid ball in the drawing room of the Mansion House.³⁵

It is interesting to note the impression made upon Perry by the two idols of his youth, Calhoun and McDuffie, when he met them in person. The following account was written six years later:

For the character of this distinguished statesman [Calhoun] I always entertained very high regard. . . . Mr. Calhoun's conversational powers are greater than those of any man living. He speaks well and very slowly. His mind is too metaphysical. His manners are pleasant and very affable. He is an ambitious man, but I believe as honest as most statesmen of the present age. I saw Mr. Calhoun again at Pendleton. He recognized me. It is said he has great tact in that way. . . . I have frequently had the pleasure of being in the company with Mr. McDuffie. I think him a greater man in some respects than Mr. Calhoun. He can make a better speech and address more reasoning to prove his propositions. But he has not the tact and management of Mr. Calhoun. Mr. McDuffie is by no means capable of managing or governing men. This is one of the highest traits in the character of Mr. Calhoun.³⁶

³⁵ *Greenville Republican*, October 7, 1826.

³⁶ *Journal*, I, 9.

CHAPTER FIVE

A Lawyer Emerges

IN THE FALL of 1826 Perry, with misgiving in his heart, journeyed alone to Columbia to be examined in law and equity before the Court of Appeals. It was his first visit to the capital, and he found it a "pleasant well built place" with good hotels.¹ It had developed rapidly since 1786, when the General Assembly had selected the Taylor plantations on the Congaree for the site. Situated at the head of navigation of the greatest river system of the state, Columbia had become a market for the interchange of cotton from the up country and plantation supplies from Charleston, and had taken much trade from the merchants of Charleston. The town was laid off in regular squares of four acres each, with spacious streets and beautiful shade trees. The two main thoroughfares, Assembly and Senate streets, at right angles, were one hundred and fifty feet wide, and the others one hundred. On the brow of a hill between Assembly and Richardson (now Main) streets, in a grove of lofty oaks, stood the State House, a large building, the first story plastered brick, the second wood.²

Robert Mills in 1826 estimated the population at four thousand and the number of houses at five hundred. There were a number of brick stores three stories high, a courthouse, two academies, and other schools. The town was very proud of South Carolina College, which had opened its doors in 1805, and of the Lunatic Asylum, a fireproof brick building

¹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 75; Journal, I, 20.

² Edwin L. Green, *A History of Richland County* (Columbia, 1932), pp. 146-166; Helen Kohn Hennig (ed.), *Columbia: Capital City of South Carolina 1786-1936* (Columbia, 1936), pp. 315-319, 349-353; "Diary of Edward Hooker," *American Historical Association Report*, 1896, I, 853-856.

nearly completed. There were two excellent book stores, with as good a choice of books as in Charleston; two circulating libraries; and two or three "spacious and elegant inns."³

As for the inhabitants, Perry considered them "inclined to be proud and aristocratic."⁴ They might well have seemed so to a young man accustomed to the rural simplicity of the back country; however, compared with the society of Charleston, that of Columbia was rather young and uncultured. Distinguished visitors were impressed with the hospitality of the citizens and with the elegance of the entertainments. The sessions of the General Assembly and the commencement exercises of the college drew people from all over the state, and brilliant balls and other festivities were held during the social season.⁵

Since the Court of Appeals did not sit until January, Perry spent a number of weeks reading law in the office of Colonel James Gregg, the acknowledged leader of the Columbia bar, noted for his brilliant intellect and careful preparation of cases for court. He had four or five students besides Perry and examined them once or twice every week. Earle had promised to examine Perry every day, but found himself too busy for the task. However, he persuaded his uncle, Thomas Harrison, whom Perry as a law student had considered the ablest lawyer of the Western circuit, to take his place. Harrison, then treasurer of the state, examined Perry thoroughly every Sunday for six weeks. When he finished, he assured the young man that he need have no apprehensions about admission, but Perry even yet felt nervous. There were twenty or thirty students to be examined, and each would be asked only two or three oral questions.⁶

While waiting for the Court of Appeals to meet, Perry used his leisure to attend the sessions of the legislature and, in the

³ Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, pp. 698-708.

⁴ *Journal*, I, 20.

⁵ Hennig (ed.), *Columbia 1786-1936*, pp. 242-243, 260-267.

⁶ *Autobiography*, 1849, pp. 18-19; *Autobiography*, 1874, pp. 75-76; John Belton O'Neill, *Biographical Sketches of the Bench and Bar of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1859), II, 430-435.

evenings, the meetings of the Judiciary Committee. What a feast of enjoyment for the aspiring young politician, as he sat hour after hour listening to the speeches! He was inspired with an ardent interest in politics which he never lost. More than twenty-five years later he vividly remembered the legislature of 1826: "There was at that time an array of talent and eloquence in that body rarely equaled in any deliberative assembly."⁷ John Belton O'Neill, of Newberry, a talented lawyer about thirty-three years of age, was Speaker of the House. He was a warm-hearted, generous man of high intellect and unsullied reputation, with a remarkable memory and bold independence of judgment. He was noted for his industry and perseverance and for his wonderful efficiency in the dispatch of business.⁸

Perry was greatly interested in the proceedings of the Judiciary Committee. Colonel Gregg was chairman, and David L. Wardlaw, Andrew P. Butler, Robert W. Barnwell, Robert Barnwell Smith, and Hugh S. Legaré were among the members. Perry was already acquainted with Wardlaw, a young lawyer of Abbeville, who often attended Greenville court, and with whom Perry was later associated in many cases. He was one of the outstanding lawyers of the state, well read, logical, and fluent in speech; before many years he was to become a judge.⁹ Butler, known to posterity for his championship of the rights of the South in the United States Senate, 1847-1857, was a young lawyer of Edgefield. Of manly form, with florid complexion and dancing eyes, he was sociable and witty.¹⁰ Perry was greatly impressed by Barnwell, a wealthy young lawyer and planter of Beaufort who had been graduated with

⁷ John Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living: with Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Their Lives and Actions* (New York and London, 1853-1854), II, 582. The biographical sketch of Perry was written by Waddy Thompson from facts supplied by Perry (Waddy Thompson to Perry, July 12 [1852], Perry Papers).

⁸ B. F. Perry, *Reminiscences of Public Men* (Greenville, S. C., 1883), pp. 202-207.

⁹ Perry, *Reminiscences of Public Men with Speeches and Addresses* (Greenville, S. C., 1889), pp. 166-172; Autobiography, 1849, p. 19.

¹⁰ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 112-115; O'Neill, *Bench and Bar*, I, 198-205.

honors from Harvard. He was tall, handsome, and graceful in his manners, with an intellectual face and animated eyes. "He was, indeed," says Perry, "a born gentleman." While still young, he was to embark on a distinguished career as congressman and president of South Carolina College.¹¹

Then there was Robert Barnwell Smith (later to change his name to Rhett), from Colleton District, a lawyer of twenty-six, cousin and intimate friend of Barnwell. Six feet tall, with blue-gray eyes and a charming smile, he was "all passion, excitement and fire." He spoke often "with great fervor and animation" in the legislature, and Perry considered him brilliant and promising. Though as the fiery disunionist of later years he was to become diametrically opposed to Perry in politics, his boldness, courtesy, and frankness struck a responsive chord in Perry's heart, and they became cordial friends.¹² With Hugh S. Legaré, the conservative Charleston lawyer, orator, classical scholar, and writer on Roman and civil law,¹³ Perry was entranced:

I heard Hugh S. Legaré speak this Session & frequently afterwards, & in my opinion he comes up nearer to the finished Orator than any man I ever did hear. . . . He had as fine a voice as I ever heard, & as complete controll of it. . . . His head & face were noble, but his body very short. His bust would have been a fine one. He was perhaps the most learned man of his age.¹⁴

William C. Preston, the brilliant Virginian who chose South Carolina for his home and became president of South Carolina College and United States senator, was also a member of the House in 1826. "He was one of nature's noblemen, in person, head and heart," writes Perry. Tall and well proportioned, he was of striking appearance, with courtly manners.¹⁵ Perry admired him greatly: "Col. Preston is one of the

¹¹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 20; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 124-128.

¹² Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 129-134; Laura A. White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett: Father of Secession* (New York and London, 1931), pp. 6-7.

¹³ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 251-255; Linda Rhea, *Hugh Swinton Legaré: A Charleston Intellectual* (Chapel Hill, 1934), *passim*.

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 20.

¹⁵ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 56-62.

finest speakers & most eloquent men I ever heard. . . . He is a man of fine literary taste & great acquirements."¹⁶

In January the applicants for admission to the bar were examined by a committee consisting of Josiah J. Evans, of Darlington District, later judge; Stephen D. Miller, who, as a member of Congress, 1818-1820, had joined the state rights group, and in 1828 was elected governor; and William Harper, who later became chancellor and one of the most ardent pro-slavery champions of the South. The students were greatly pleased with the manner of Evans in conducting the examination; he was "so kind and gentle, so courteous and instructive" that he completely won their hearts.¹⁷ Perry's impression of Harper is interesting:

Chancellor Harper had then a very high reputation as a lawyer & a man of great ability. . . . He was an awkward & ungainly looking man, always shabily dressed, had but little to say in conversation and would never be taken by a stranger for a great man. He was a fine scholar & wrote remarkably well. In speaking he was not pleasant, had a way of grunting & repeating his words which made it disagreeable at first to listen to him. He had the most extraordinary memory I ever heard of.¹⁸

Since Perry had applied for admission in both law and equity, he was examined twice. The test was rigid, but he and one other applicant, Daniels, of Spartanburg, did not miss a single question. In the evening the applicants invited the examining committee to an elaborate dinner at the United States Hotel, for which they paid seven dollars each, the total cost being \$150. Perry's funds were so reduced that he had to borrow fifteen dollars to pay his fare home. He secured this from his Greenville friend, Elias D. Earle, just graduated from South Carolina College. Perry had visited the college the morning after he arrived in Columbia, and felt a deep regret that he had not been able to enter as a student.¹⁹ More

¹⁶ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 63-64.

¹⁷ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 21-22; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 85-89, 116-123; O'Neill, *Bench and Bar*, II, 410-415.

¹⁸ Autobiography, 1849, p. 22.

¹⁹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 76-77; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 21, 24.

than twenty years later he wrote in his Autobiography: "Feeling as I have done, through life, the great want of a collegiate education, it shall be my pride to give my sons every advantage in this respect, provided they are disposed to improve them."²⁰

Earle accompanied Perry home, and it took the stage three nights and days to make the trip. In his old age Perry thus recalled their journey:

Earle had his Diploma in his pocket, & I had my commissions as a lawyer & solicitor in Equity. We were both full of bright hopes as to the future. He was to study medicine, get married & become a great Physician. I was to study hard live an old bachelor & make a name for myself in law & politics. These were our vagaries as we travelled on in the stage coach. But how sadly we were both disappointed! . . . I aspired to be a member of Congress was defeated & concluded to get married & live an humble happy life. In this I have not been disappointed. Had I been more yielding to the popular will, less scrupulous in my patriotism and political principles, I might have succeeded better, but then I should have lost an approving conscience & felt mean all the days of my life.²¹

II

Perry was admitted to the bar on January 10, 1827, as one of sixteen licensed to practice in the courts of law, and one of seven in the courts of equity. Ten days later his card appeared in the *Greenville Republican*:

The subscriber having been licensed to practice in the Courts of Common Law and Equity in this State, has established himself in this place, and opened an office in the Court House, where he may be constantly found.

Jan. 20, 1827.

B. F. PERRY.²²

His uncle Robert wished him to settle at Pendleton, but he had become attached to Greenville, and thus explains his decision to stay there:

²⁰ Autobiography, 1849, p. 21.

²¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 79-80.

²² Perry states in his Autobiography that the class consisted of fifteen (Autobiography, 1849, p. 21).

I desired to make this beautiful mountain village my permanent home. I had formed a great many acquaintances throughout the District & they were favorably inclined towards me. I had an office in the Court House free of rent, was boarding cheaply at a fine hotel & thought I could support myself. . . . The village of Greenville was a flourishing place & rapidly increasing in population & commerce. It was the Summer retreat of a great many wealthy families from below & with whom I had made pleasant acquaintances.

Though Perry had faith in the growth of Greenville, his immediate prospects were rather gloomy. There was little business in the courts, never more than a hundred cases at a term, and often court adjourned within three days. In his Autobiography Perry draws an interesting contrast between the courts of 1827 and those of 1874 in Greenville:

Now the Court sits here two or three weeks & we have three terms in the year instead of two! But three times the amount of business was then dispatched in a day that is now. The lawyers made short speeches & seldom more than one on each side argued the case. Now we have two or three arguments on each side & sometimes the whole Bar are engaged in an important case. There were in those days very few witnesses examined & the examination was brief and to the points at issue.²³

The village already had five practicing lawyers, each with his regular clients: Baylis Earle, Tandy Walker, William Choice, William J. Gantt, and Waddy Thompson, Jr. Earle and Choice had formed a partnership, Choice being considered "a most capital collecting lawyer, punctual & attentive to his business." Walker was "a fluent speaker and popular in his manner." Gantt, the young son of Judge Richard Gantt, had only recently established himself there and was a carefree village sport rather than a serious rival. But Waddy Thompson, son of Chancellor Thompson, was a very talented lawyer and a skilful politician as well. For five years after his admission to the bar he had practiced at Edgefield; he had moved to Greenville soon after Perry came there to read law. He had

²³ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 58, 81.

been elected to the legislature from Greenville District in 1826. Perry thought highly of him:

His kindness and cordiality, his talents, wit and humor and great conversational powers, won my admiration and affectionate regard. . . .

General Thompson was a man of rare talents, tact and energy of character. As a political electioneer he can scarcely be said to have had a superior. He knew human nature well and understood how to approach every one.

Other lawyers in the circuit attended Greenville court and had some of the business: James H. Irby and Henry C. Young, of Laurens; James Edward Henry, of Spartanburg; Joseph N. Whitner, of Anderson; David L. Wardlaw, of Abbeville; and Armistead Burt, of Pendleton, who removed to Abbeville in 1828.²⁴

In spite of his unflattering prospects, Perry was determined to succeed. When he went to Columbia for the bar examination, he had left his office in the care of William Gantt. He returned to find it a rendezvous for loafers and had to resort to stratagem to get rid of them. He would usually lock his door; the loafers would come, knock, and retire. Soon they learned not to disturb him. Gantt remarked that if a man had no business he came to his office; if he had business, he went to Perry's.²⁵

When Perry began practice, he owed over \$1,000 to his uncle Robert, who had advanced most of the money for his board and tuition while he was pursuing his studies, and also \$500 or more to other persons who had been kind enough to credit him. At the spring term of court in 1827, he issued only nine cases. In a few years, however, he obtained his share of cases, and his meager income of \$500 for the first year rose steadily. His case book for the years 1827-1834 is an interesting record of his progress, and in its systematic account of the cases at each spring and fall term takes accurate notice of the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 297-298; *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 6.

²⁵ *Autobiography*, 1849, pp. 25-26.

financial, as well as legal, results of each case. In the fall term of 1827 Perry issued twenty-six cases and had five defenses; in the following spring, thirty cases and nine defenses; in the spring of 1829, thirty-seven cases and eleven defenses. His records indicate careful study of the law involved.²⁶

Perry suffered a mortifying experience at his debut in the spring of 1827. Armistead Burt had engaged him to assist in the defense of a murder case at Pendleton, to give him an opportunity of making a speech. A "poor devil" named Woods had killed his wife with a battering stick made for washing clothes, and the only witness was a ten- or twelve-year-old daughter. In spite of his experience in public speaking, the young lawyer was overcome with stage fright. He thus describes the incident:

The trial of the case excited some interest, and a parcel of ladies came into the Court House to hear the speeches. Miss Miriam Earle was amongst them, & I was at that time a good deal smitten by her beauty, intelligence and amiability. Her presence rather allarmed me, & my speech was a most signal failure. This too was my debut at the Bar. It seemed when I rose up to speak that my mind was a perfect blank. I had not an idea in my head, & had forgotten all the circumstances of the case. I said a few words & had to sit down. Never did a poor lawyer feel more mental agony than I did on that occasion. I felt as if I wished the earth to open & swallow me up.²⁷

His friend Burt took a walk with him after the trial and tried to console him, but Perry felt for a while that his career at the bar was ended. He resolved, however, to try again, and fully redeemed himself at Greenville court the following week. He defended a man for stealing a pair of shoes, and since there were no ladies present to disconcert him, made a good speech, analyzing the testimony carefully and reasoning logically from it. The jury acquitted the prisoner, though Perry had no doubt that he had stolen the shoes. Judge Earle, who had witnessed his failure at Pendleton, congratulated him, as did

²⁶ Autobiography, 1874, p. 83; MS Ledger, Perry Papers.

²⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 27.

other members of the bar.²⁸ Perry's spirits revived. He was soon employed in a good many criminal cases. "I have a very loud voice and a fluency of speech when animated," he afterwards explained. "This pleases the crowd, and the populace soon began to think me a 'good lawyer.'"²⁹ The next fall he appeared at Pendleton in the defense of a boy for stealing a knife. His client was acquitted, and his defense highly complimented by the judge. Perry rejoiced: "This was, in some measure, wiping off my disgrace on the same battle field where it occurred."³⁰

Not many years after he began practicing, the election of Judge Earle to the bench and Waddy Thompson to the solicitorship of the Western circuit gave him command of all the sessions business at Greenville, and a large share of that at Pickens. This practice, though generally unprofitable to an old lawyer, Perry considered valuable to a young one: it introduced him to the people, trained him in speaking, and provided handsome fees now and then, especially in capital cases. At one term he defended nine capital cases, five at Greenville and four at Pickens, under charges of murder, rape, passing counterfeit money, and forgery.

Perry started practicing law just before the tariff agitation in South Carolina, which was followed by the long and bitter nullification controversy. For many years the profession was at a low ebb. He reflects in his Autobiography:

Political excitement seemed to destroy the business of our courts. It is philosophically true that one excitement or passion will destroy or root out an other. The people were so busied in politics, & so excited by party contests that they did not care to indulge in the luxury of litigation. I have observed throughout my Professional life that law & litigation subsided as political excitements sprung up in South Carolina.

When the Nullifiers and Unionists had made their peace, law business again picked up, and Perry's income rose to about

²⁸ Autobiography, 1874, p. 86.

²⁹ Journal, I, 6-7.

³⁰ Autobiography, 1849, p. 34.

\$3,000 a year; then for several years it averaged from \$5,000 to \$8,000 annually. "I do not think any lawyer on the circuit made more," he observes.

Perry's success was natural. There was a great deal of shrewd common sense in his make-up, and a very practical business turn. Once he had chosen his goal, his rigid self-discipline and industry kept it continuously before him. He made it a rule to be in his office constantly, even though there was very little business at first. "Whilst the young men of the Town spent the greater part of their time in the streets or piazzas of the Hotels & Stores, I was in my office reading," he avers.³¹ He was thus accessible to any clients who might wish to see him. He did not relax his studies, but began reading over again all the books that he had studied. Blackstone's *Commentaries* he continued to read once every year until Kent's *Commentaries* made its appearance. When Tandy Walker retired from the bar soon afterwards, Perry purchased his library for \$150.³²

He also went through much miscellaneous literature. "I continued to read as I had done in my boyhood everything I could lay my hands on, history, novels, poetry, religion, philosophy & politics," he writes. Poetry he did not enjoy very much, and novel reading he discontinued in afterlife, thinking it a waste of time. "But my greatest waste of time was newspapers & politics," he states.³³ There was still no doubt about the bent of his mind.

It was Perry's habit to go to Columbia every fall to visit the sessions of the legislature and Court of Appeals. Though he had no business in the Court for several years and did not become a member of the legislature until 1836, he considered it profitable to spend \$100 of his small income on these visits. "They gave me an opportunity of seeing and becoming acquainted with the prominent men of the State, & listening to the speeches & debates in the Legislature. They were of service too, in the way of relaxation from my studies."

³¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 87-88, 104.

³² Autobiography, 1849, p. 26.

³³ Autobiography, 1874, p. 104.

Another custom that Perry followed as a young lawyer was to ride the circuit whether he had any business or not. Again, he combined business and pleasure. It was a good plan, he thought, for a lawyer to be "first at a court & the last to leave"; it would manifest a disposition to acquire business which the people would notice. Often he was employed in the latter part of the week to assist in cases. In addition, he found riding the circuit a pleasant recreation. "It was refreshing to meet friends and acquaintances after the lapse of three or four months & talk over the events which had happened & the news of the day," he observes. Several lawyers would generally arrange to ride together from one courthouse to another.³⁴

Having no horse or carriage of his own, Perry at first rode with a friend or hired a conveyance. He went with Judge Earle to Abbeville when the first circuit began, and rode with him quite frequently thereafter.³⁵ Judge Richard Gantt, who lived a few miles from Greenville, was also very kind about taking Perry in his carriage on the circuit. He was a native of Maryland and had read law with William Pinkney. Perry found his company very enjoyable: "He had a great deal of humour & told a great many excellent stories and anecdotes. He was the most benevolent & kindhearted man I ever knew, but as fickle & whimsical as he was kind & benevolent."³⁶

Since his "horse & hack hire" grew to be a very expensive item, Perry decided to keep a horse of his own and bought one from his brother-in-law, Davis Hunt. His father sent him a Negro boy named Sheriff as body servant and hostler. Sheriff made his own board by working about the hotel, and became devoted to his master.³⁷

The young lawyer was pleased with his chosen profession. In the summer of 1832 he wrote in his *Journal*: "The life of a lawyer is an easy and indolent one." He was enjoying the leisure for study and reading, and the good fellowship on the circuits.³⁸

³⁴ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 31-33, 108.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31; *Journal*, I, 18.

³⁶ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 229-235; Autobiography, 1849, p. 18.

³⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 31.

³⁸ I, 7-8.

CHAPTER SIX

A Young Gallant of Greenville

DURING THE PERIOD when Perry was reading law in Greenville, the village was making rapid strides as a trading place and summer resort. The state road was completed from Greenville through the Saluda Mountain Gap, furnishing an excellent route for Western drovers to the Charleston and Augusta markets. During the winter more than fifty thousand hogs, with a proportionate number of horses, mules, beeves, and sheep, were driven through Greenville. The farmers of the district found a ready market for their grain and food crops.¹

Robert Mills has given an interesting account of the village in 1826. A handsome brick courthouse had been erected; two brick churches, one Baptist and the other Episcopal, now supplanted the courthouse as places of worship. There were "two neat buildings for the male and female academy," and three public houses "which will vie in accommodation and appearance with any in the state." Some "large and handsome" private houses had been erected, including Judge Thompson's, which commanded a beautiful view of the village. Altogether, Greenville had about seventy houses and a population of five hundred. A subscription library had been established; an agricultural society was about to be organized, and a newspaper to be published. "The climate of Greenville," Mills wrote, "is one of the most delightful in the world."²

¹ *Greenville Republican*, September 16, November 4, 1826; May 12, 1827.

² *Statistics of South Carolina*, pp. 571-578. The brick courthouse, built in 1823, was a beautiful piece of architecture, which stood on Main Street where the Liberty Life Insurance Building is now located. When a new courthouse was erected on the opposite side of Main Street in 1856 (supplanted by yet another in 1917), the

Mills was evidently in Greenville during the early months of 1826, since the *Greenville Republican*, the first issue of which appeared in July, had not yet been published. In May of the following year, the *Republican* published an editorial entitled "Greenville," extolling the village as a summer resort for "our low country friends, whom the fever and mosquitoes drive from their homes during the summer." It described the improvements during the last fifteen years: the spacious hotels and boarding houses for entertaining travelers "at rates, beyond all comparison, cheaper than in the low country"; the weekly mail communication with "the North, the West, Charleston, Augusta, and Savannah"; the brisk Western trade over the Saluda Mountain road. It boasted of the professional and mechanic pursuits in Greenville—"all get employment but the Doctors—we have but little use for them. As regards health and climate, probably no spot on the globe excels Greenville; the purity of its air and water cannot be surpassed."

It turned then to those seeking pleasure:

The citizens are hospitable and kind to strangers; their manners unaffected and agreeable, and distinguished by the cheerfulness of health. During the summer, the town is crowded with strangers and invalids from the low country; this is a season of festivity and gaiety with us, while the inhabitants of the lower part of the State are wasted by heat, pestered by sand flies and mosquitoes, and destroyed by fevers and agues. It is true, our balls and parties may not exhibit as much artificial splendor as those of Charleston, but we can shew far more brilliant objects—we have the blooming cheeks of health and sound constitutions to admire. Nor are our fair ones deficient in pure taste and elegance of dress.

old building was used as the Hall of Records. After standing over a century, it was torn down, to the regret of the art lovers of Greenville. The Baptist Church stood at what was then the eastern boundary of McBee Avenue. The Episcopal Church was in about the same location as Christ Church today—in front of the present Sunday School room with "1826" on its gable end. The two academies stood on the grounds occupied by the Woman's College today, on College Street. Judge Thompson's handsome home was located on North Main Street between the present Otteray Hotel and Springwood Cemetery (Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, pp. 19, 27-40; *Greenville News*, Fiftieth Anniversary Number, December 30, 1923; conversations of author with old residents of Greenville).

For "the admirers of the sublime and picturesque in nature," the editorial then painted in poetic terms the scenery around the village: "to the South, the distant and level country looks like the ocean—to the East are seen the Glassy mountains, their sides glittering in the Sun—and to the North and West, the Saluda mountains and the Blue ridge rise in cloud-capped majesty."³

The Mansion House was still the most elegant hotel for summer visitors, and advertised its rates at \$4.50 per week for one gentleman and \$2.50 for one horse. One of the accommodations for tourists in the village was the "Greenville Bath House" on the shores of Reedy River. Both hot and cold baths and showers could be secured at \$1.00 per month, or a single shower at 6¼ cents, pool and shower 12½ cents, warm bath 25 cents.⁴

Three years later another editorial gave a brief, comprehensive account of the assets of the village. By this time the population had risen to about six hundred; there were nine stores and six "first rate public houses." The writer itemized the other business and mechanic pursuits: "three tailor's shops, three milliner's shops, four blacksmith's shops, two carriage making establishments, two tan yards, two grist mills, one saw mill, one baker, one silversmith's shop, one cabinet-maker's shop, one painter's shop, one shoe maker's shop, one saddler's shop, two tin shops, and one printing office."⁵

Perry continued boarding at Crittenden's Hotel, which was always filled in summer with visitors from the low country. The village was crowded with gay young people from Charleston, Savannah, and Augusta. Scarcely a week passed in summer without a dance, and even in the winter there were many parties and balls. Perry describes more romantic diversions:

It was then the fashion of moonlight nights to walk to the Falls, & many a lover has there told his love & expressed the depth of his

³ May 12, 1827.

⁴ *Ibid.*, August 11, 1827.

⁵ *Greenville Mountaineer*, April 23, 1830.

passion to the fair one beside him. Fishing parties too were fashionable in those days & I have often seen the young men & ladies with hook & tackle marching through the Streets on a fishing excursion in the Reedy River. In winter snow balling was not unknown to the girls & boys in the piazas & streets.⁶

S. S. Crittenden, son of the hotel proprietor, speaks of the names of young people engraven on the rocks around the falls and of the old "enchanted tree" with its seat of rock just large enough for two. "Music and love, and moonlight were ever associated with 'The Falls' in the olden days of Greenville," he writes.⁷

Charles A. David, cartoonist and local historian, born in Greenville in 1853, lived to see this picturesque rendezvous transformed by industrial plants. Today it is concealed from view by a great concrete bridge that spans the river. The rounded rock above the falls, with names of generations of Greenville lovers chiseled on its surface, is now covered by Camperdown Mill. Only by descending a narrow, precipitous path on the west side of the bridge can one reach the scene—still charming in its setting of mimosas, willows, and an occasional oak or Camperdown elm. David remembered reaching the spot in his youth by a shady path that wound through a splendid grove of oak and hickory. From above the falls he watched the waters as they foamed over the rocks. Across the pond, partly hidden by a clump of ancient willows, stood the picturesque old stone mill built about 1820, probably on the exact spot where the corn mill of Richard Pearis was located when Greenville was an Indian trading post.⁸

II

Perry was an enthusiastic participant in the social life of the village. Ever since his school days he had been in the coterie of young gallants who courted the belles of Green-

⁶ Autobiography, 1874, p. 65; Autobiography, 1849, p. 74.

⁷ *Greenville Century Book*, p. 14.

⁸ *Greenville News*, Fiftieth Anniversary Number, December 30, 1923; C. A. David, "Greenville of Old," Numbers 27, 54, David Scrap Book (Mr. Louis David, Greenville, S. C.). (This series appeared in the *Greenville News* 1926-1927.) Visit of author to scene, June 19, 1941.

ville. As a law student, he continued his social activities with a gay group of young men, "not remarkable for any extraordinary qualities either good or bad." Dr. William Robinson, who got up parties and balls, was "a great beau and favourite with the young ladies." Colonel Tandy Walker was "pleasant, kind and amiable," but lacking in firmness of character. William Choice was "then a kindhearted & friendly man, decidedly social & cordial in his manners & intercourse." William Gantt was "a great ladies man & always in love & always unfortunate in his love scrapes," talented and fine looking, but "idle & utterly wanting in energy of character." Two of Perry's friends of Greenville Academy days also belonged to the coterie: William Thompson, "a boone companion & always ready for a spree," and Elias D. Earle, sociable though bad tempered. A dangerous rival of these Greenville gallants was John H. Hewitt, who attained a reputation in poetry as well as music by publication of "The Wanderer" while in the village.⁹

Many were the gay expeditions to Table Rock, a fashionable resort about twenty miles away, and to Paris Mountain, only eight miles from the village. Perry visited Table Rock for the first time when a Fourth of July celebration was held on its summit. He was greatly impressed by the perpendicular rock one thousand feet high and a half mile long, with a spring of pure water on its top dripping into a pool below that reflected like a looking glass. "The ladies are very coy in going near it," writes Perry. "There is a cedar bush on top, hanging over the precipice, on which a thousand names have been cut to immortalize the visitors. How many love scrapes & courtships are identified with a visit to the Table Rock." He joined many other pleasant excursions to the Rock. In the summer of 1826 he accompanied his friend of Greenville Academy days, Dr. Henry H. Townes, who overturned the buggy two or three times on the way. The following summer he was one of a gay party who spent several days at the hotel

⁹ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 78-79; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 221-222, 227; editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, October 27, 1853.

near the Rock, enjoying walks in the daytime and dancing in the evening.¹⁰

In the fall of 1828 Perry paid his first visit to the low country, accompanying his schoolmate, William Mauldin, to his marriage with the granddaughter of Benjamin Allston of Georgetown. As they traveled below Columbia, Perry, accustomed to hill and dale, was "amazed at the immense plain which I everywhere beheld, & the sameness of the road became intolerable to me. I said to Mauldin that I would give something handsome for a sight of the mountains in passing the Wateree Swamp which is five or six miles in extent." He was entertained by Allston, one of the wealthiest rice planters in the state, and enjoyed the novelty of the seacoast and the small vessels loaded with rice in the harbor. Their masts he thought at first were "old pine trees standing in a mill pond."¹¹

III

While associating with the young people of Greenville in their parties and outings, Perry did not join them in drinking, gambling, hunting, or other sports; nor did he spend time lounging in the streets or hotels. "My books, my business, & female society occupied all my time," he tells us.

There was a pleasure & charm in the company of refined & intelligent young ladies, which completely won my heart. I delighted to be with them, & admire their beauty, grace, loveliness, & cordial frank manners and conversation. There was an innocence and purity about them, which I knew did not belong to my own sex. I spent a great deal of my time, considering I was a hard student, in visiting & escorting the young ladies about. I was fond of going to Balls & parties to meet them, although I knew nothing about dancing.

"We had at that time in Greenville a remarkably fine set of young ladies who were all pretty, sociable & smart," writes Perry. Caroline Thompson, the belle to whom he presented his Fourth of July oration in 1825, was "beautiful & highly

¹⁰ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 118-122, 212; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 48-49.

¹¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 124-125; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 50-51.

intellectual," and "the favorite of all who knew her." He confided to his friend, Montraville Patton, of Asheville, that he had "a peculiar regard" for her.¹² But Caroline was courted by young men far and near, and Perry's attachment does not seem to have been serious. A more lasting romance was that with Caroline Cleveland, daughter of Jeremiah Cleveland, the wealthy merchant who lived in the large two-story brick home on the northeast corner of Main and McBee streets.¹³ "For five or six years I was a great deal in her company," writes Perry, "and many pleasant hours have we spent together in chatting, playing chess, walking to the Falls of moonlight nights & riding in a buggy." He admired her frankness and independence, as well as her good looks and "uncommonly vigorous mind." Another favorite was Elizabeth McLeod, daughter of Francis McLeod, a rice planter who had moved to Greenville from Savannah.¹⁴

But his love affair with Miriam Earle seems to have been his most serious before meeting the Charleston girl who was to become his wife. Miriam was the sister of Judge Earle, and the daughter of Samuel Earle, a Revolutionary officer and ex-member of Congress who lived seven or eight miles below Perry's old home. He had seen her while she was attending the Greenville Academy, but did not meet her until later, when he became pleased with "her beauty, fine person, pleasant manners & intelligence." He visited her frequently as he passed on his way to his father's.¹⁵ About the time he completed his law course, he wrote his friend Henry Townes:

I should have answered your letter sooner had I not been absent for eight or ten days past on a visit to my father in Pendleton, where I spent two or three days very pleasantly at a baptist Association. I met with Miss M.—E.— there, and am greatly enraptured

¹² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 105, 165; M. Patton to Perry, August 17, 1825, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

¹³ *Greenville News*, Fiftieth Anniversary Number, December 30, 1923. The home was occupied by the Cleveland family for over a hundred years; it was torn down in 1909 for erection of a three-story business house (*ibid.*).

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 105-106; Autobiography, 1849, p. 80.

¹⁵ Autobiography, 1874, p. 67; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 77-82.

with the grace of her person, the dignity of her mien, and the vivacity of her conversation. Methought I saw in her, all that fascination and every lovely charm, which four years ago, made her, in my eyes, the handsomest and most amiable creature in the world. I rode home with her from meeting, and paid every attention to her, whilst there, that I possible could, which she seemed to receive with pleasure. On my return to Greenville I called at her fathers and spent four or five hours in company with her.¹⁶

Miriam's family looked upon him with approval. Her father had written Perry's uncle Robert, an intimate friend, that he would like to make a match between them and would give her land, a house, and twelve slaves. Perry wrote years later:

I thought she seemed pleased with me & expected me to address her. But I was poor & making very little by my Profession. I thought it would be a most imprudent step for me [to] take to encumber myself with a family. If I had had a fortune I would have addressed her as I have stated in my Journal. But I never whispered a word of love to her. My uncle told me that if I was not going to address her I ought not to pay her any further attentions. This was long after my admission to the Bar.¹⁷

Perry allowed his head to rule his heart, and Miriam married a Mr. Mays and moved to Florida. Several years later, after her husband's death, she returned with her two children to live in Greenville. By that time Perry himself had married, and Miriam became a warm friend of his wife.¹⁸

IV

While a law student in Greenville, Perry expended some of his romantic energy writing essays on sentimental subjects for the *Ladies' Literary Portfolio* and the *Greenville Republican*. Though most of his literary activities were directed along political lines, an occasional article gave his moral or philosophical views on such subjects as "Gallantry," "Love," and "The Injudicious Choice." In his paper on "Gallantry," Perry, under the pseudonym "A Mohametan," discussed the evil as well

¹⁶ September 25, 1826, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

¹⁷ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 67-68.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*; Autobiography, 1849, p. 16.

as good results of the social contact between men and women in Western countries as compared with Eastern. Some young men, he said, devoted their whole time to being attractive to ladies, and thus became fops or dandies. Gallantry, when indulged to any length, was an inseparable barrier to all intellectual and literary improvement.

In the article on "Love," Perry analyzed the difference between momentary and lasting love. Perhaps it was such thoughts as these that made him resist the beauties and belles of the up country until the discreet age of thirty-one:

Love is a passion which is more frequently talked of than felt and oftener felt than founded on any noble or virtuous principle. . . . The principle exciting cause of this passion seems to be beauty. . . . Perhaps this very beauty which has excited Love is a deception—That bloom on the cheek may be only the affect of art, that symmetry of shape may be the torturing effects of vanity, and that graceful mien studied affectation. . . . But besides beauty there are other causes of Love more dishonourable and unworthy of being mentioned. If love were to be always founded on esteem and friendship or what is the same thing on the merit, virtues and amiableness of the mind then it might be exalted above all other passions with propriety.¹⁹

In spite of his debonair gallantry, he reflected soberly on marriage. He writes in his *Autobiography* of 1874:

But notwithstanding this admiration for the other sex I was aware my situation would not justify me in thinking of getting married. I was poor, & made, for many years after my admission to the Bar, barely enough to support myself with all my prudence & economy. My pride & my sense of justice & propriety forbid all matrimonial views. I could not think of marrying for a fortune, and if I had entertained any such thoughts, it is not likely that I could, in my poverty and obscurity, have won the hand of an heiress. . . . Notwithstanding all my sentiment & passion and all my love for the ladies I had a good deal of worldly prudence in my composition, which General Charles Lee denounced to Washington at the battle of Monmouth as "a rascally virtue."²⁰

¹⁹ MS, Perry Papers.

²⁰ Pp. 165-166.

V

The sober traits of Perry's character overweighed the frivolous. In his Autobiographies he gives some account of his habits and inclinations at this period:

In all the village I never had any very intimate & confidential associates. I differed from them in my feelings & pursuits & they differed widely from me in their notions & inclinations. My books were, at all times, my best companions & most loved by me & it is well for me that they were. A love for reading is an inestimable blessing to any young man, and I really pity one who does not possess it. There were very few in Greenville, at this time, who ever spent an hour in the day reading books.²¹

He was never fond of cards and was scolded by the young ladies for his awkward game of whist. He was, however, "extravagantly fond" of chess, and played it frequently. Of dancing he remarks:

I had less skill in dancing than in playing whist. No one had ever taught me to dance, & I did not know one tune from an other! As to time & step & figure they were to me Chinese riddles. I never thought of attempting to learn them. But I danced on all occasions, for the pleasure of my partners company, & holding her hands, as we walked around & through the figure.

He played billiards only half a dozen times in his life, though the other young men of the village played constantly. He drank nothing for many years after admission to the bar. In old age, however, he considered spirits "serviceable when taken in moderation." As for smoking, he observes: "Although I never smoked till I was fifty years old, I am now in my old age one of the most inveterate smokers in South Carolina." He had started smoking at the doctor's suggestion to relieve a throat affection and found that it also quieted his nerves while studying.

But Perry did not consider himself blameless in his youth. He thus reports a conversation with an older citizen of Greenville:

²¹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 77.

Whilst I was reading law Col. William E. Blassingame, who was no friend of mine, for I had taken a stand against him in his canvass for the State Senate, said to me one day all young men have some vice or other, but I have never been able to discover yours. You dont drink chew or smoke. You are studious & moral. You do not play cards, billiards, or gamble in any way. I have not heard of your quarrelling or fighting. I should like to know what your [vice] is? . . . But it was a great mistake to suppose my character was perfect or blameless. . . . I was passionate, very passionate in my youth and resentful. I tried very hard to control my temper, & resentments, but never could entirely subdue them.

He tells of kicking an old man named Waddle out of Crittenden's piazza for being impertinent, and of striking a man named Benson for calling him a liar. Benson, a blacksmith with a powerful arm, gave him such a blow that he felt as if a horse had kicked him, and he was hurled a rod away.²²

VI

Since his arrival in Greenville, Perry had formed many warm personal friendships. Among the older citizens, Colonel William Toney, owner of the Mansion House, was very kind to him.²³ So was Chancellor Waddy Thompson, "a noble looking gentleman, tall and well proportioned, with an uncommonly fine head and face." Full of wit and humor, he enjoyed the company of young people. Perry spent many pleasant hours in his home—especially before Caroline was married.²⁴ There were other less distinguished citizens whom Perry found congenial. Francis McLeod, of Savannah, "an amiable modest gentleman," called often at his office, bringing newspapers, a new novel, or a book of travel, and stayed to chat for hours if no clients were there. Perry found great pleasure in his companionship, for he was always a Unionist. Another devoted friend was Colonel Benajah Dunham, a bachelor mechanic and merchant from Massachusetts who had acquired large property in Greenville and contributed liberally to all

²² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 70-74.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

²⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 236-240.

public enterprises. "I have seldom met in life a man of better sense & judgement, or one whom I would more readily consult in all business matters," Perry writes. Also a steadfast Unionist, Dunham spent much of his leisure time with Perry. Two men nearer his own age with whom Perry developed a lifelong friendship were Dr. A. B. Crook, who boarded at Crittenden's Hotel with him for a number of years, and Perry E. Duncan, a wealthy planter. Crook, a man of vigorous intellect, was warmly devoted to his friends, but made enemies by his blunt-spoken, impulsive nature. Duncan, besides being closely associated with Perry in politics for many years as a Unionist, served him faithfully in several trying personal difficulties.²⁵

While a law student, Perry met several visitors from the low country who became his staunch friends. James O'Hanlon, who had a plantation, "Log Castle," not many miles from Columbia, became intimate with Perry when he visited Greenville in 1825. Both ardent Unionists, they exchanged frequent visits for many years.²⁶ Perry met James L. Petigru of Charleston in 1824, when Petigru was spending some time in Greenville with his wife and family and frequently visited Judge Earle's office. Perry formed a great admiration for him, which ripened into mutual affection as the two became closely associated in social and political life. Twenty-five years later Perry wrote of his friend:

He is a man of strong feelings & attachments & the most pleasant companion I ever saw. His wit & humour are unsurpassed. He is a man of great talents & learning. I think & have long said that he was the ablest & most accomplished lawyer in the United States. As a statesman he is below mediocrity & should never engage in politics again. I have heard him make the ablest speech I ever did hear at the Bar. . . . His powers of sarcasm & ridicule are unparalleled. There is something in the tone of his voice calculated to make one smile. He has a peculiar shriek which is irresistible in the ridiculous. . . . He is short & well built & rather rustic in his appearance & manners.²⁷

²⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 217-218; editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 14, 1853.

²⁶ James O'Hanlon to Perry, January 26, 1859, Perry Papers.

²⁷ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 64-65.

After observing him in the legislature in 1832, Perry wrote: "His arguments in the Legislature smell too much of the Bar. His illustrations are too apt to be legal or lawyer like. . . . He is a profound lawyer and perhaps has more talent for the Bar than the Legislature."²⁸

Another distinguished Unionist from the low country was Joel R. Poinsett, who later purchased "Tanglewood," the beautiful estate of John Blassingame, Jr., about four miles southwest of the village. As superintendent of public works for the state, he had officially supervised the construction of the road over Saluda Gap. Perry became acquainted with him after he returned from his ministry in Mexico in 1830. Thereafter they were closely affiliated in the Union party, and became intimate. Perry enjoyed hearing of his travels and admired his wisdom, public spirit, artistic taste, and simple, unaffected manners.²⁹

Early in his career Perry also formed a devoted friendship with John Belton O'Neill. Through their contact on the Western circuit and their activities as Unionist leaders of the up country, they became constant companions. O'Neill later purchased a farm on South Tyger River, fifteen miles above Greenville—land that had belonged originally to Colonel John Thomas—and spent his summers there. His winters he spent at his plantation, "Springfield," three miles west of Newberry.³⁰ Perry greatly admired him, writing in 1832: "On the Bench he never had his equal in South Carolina. He dispatches business and refers to cases with incredible facility. He is one of the best Lawyers in the State. . . ."³¹

Perry met other distinguished Carolinians in Greenville—among them Robert Y. Hayne, of Charleston, who was to become the prince of Nullifiers. Hayne spent a day or two at Crittenden's Hotel in 1825 when a member of the United

²⁸ Journal, I, 16.

²⁹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 246-250; Perry, "Reminiscences of the County of Greenville," *Greenville Enterprise*, September 27, 1871; Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, p. 19. There are three stone arch bridges, one marked "1820," near the present highway over Saluda Gap, which are said by the mountain people to have been constructed by Poinsett (Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 400 n.).

³⁰ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 202-207.

³¹ Journal, I, 30-31.

States Senate, and Perry was charmed with his youthful appearance and "cordial, cheerful manners & great conversational powers." Later he frequently heard Hayne speak and admired his "fervid & eloquent" manner.³²

Of all the friendships that Perry formed in his youth, none equaled that with Judge Daniel Elliott Huger of Charleston. Born of a wealthy, aristocratic family in 1779, Huger had been graduated from Harvard and served with distinction in the South Carolina House before being elected judge in 1819. O'Neill, then a student at South Carolina College, observed him in the legislature of 1811, and later wrote: "He was then unquestionably the first man of that body. . . . When Mr. Huger spoke, all was silent, and his counsels generally prevailed." Though a Federalist, he refused to go with his party in opposition to the War of 1812, stating that it was his duty to support his country. He was almost ostracized by his friends, but hailed as a true patriot by the people and elected brigadier general. In 1828, when, at his suggestion, the salaries of circuit judges were reduced, he showed his punctilious sense of honor by resigning in order to be re-elected at the reduced pay.

Huger was a man of commanding appearance—six feet tall, slender and erect, with "strongly marked features, so indicative of indomitable character."³³ His deep gray eyes shone from under ponderous eyebrows when he was excited in debate; "his dark frown and sardonic grin" were terrific. In character he was "the bravest among the brave," fearless, frank, and affable—a man of wisdom and a pure heart.³⁴ "Before I knew him personally & before I was grown, I had the highest admiration for his character & he was my beau ideal of honour & chivalry," writes Perry. He became acquainted with Huger while reading law in Greenville, but did not know him intimately until he started riding the Western circuit with him in 1829.³⁵ The young lawyer greatly enjoyed his companionship

³² Autobiography, 1849, pp. 61-62.

³³ O'Neill, *Bench and Bar*, I, 180-184.

³⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 90-98.

³⁵ Autobiography, 1849, p. 58.

on the long rides: "I had never before met with a man whose views so entirely corresponded with my own."³⁶

This adoration—for it was nothing less—continued a lifetime. Twenty years later Perry wrote: "I have been more strongly attached to Judge Huger than any other public man in South Carolina."³⁷ In 1854, at the death of Huger, Perry poured forth his affection in an editorial:

We admired and loved the man, and his high and noble traits of character, as we have seldom loved and admired any one. He was, from our youth to the day of his death, the beau-ideal of our conception of a brave, high-toned, patriotic and honorable man. He was, in our estimation, the model of a Carolina gentleman, without fear and without reproach. Kind and courteous to all, he was strongly affectionate to his friends, and forgiving to his enemies. Never trespassing on the feelings of others, he permitted no one to wound his with impunity. In his own language, he had been brought up in a school which knew no age for dishonor.³⁸

Undoubtedly he found in Huger the ideal that he had lost in Calhoun and McDuffie: a man who embodied his own views of unionism and democratic reform. In the heat of the nullification controversy, when Huger was skilfully manipulating the party movements of the Unionists, Perry wrote admiringly, "If there breathes a patriot at this day it is Huger."³⁹ Especially did Huger's advocacy of democratic reform in the state constitution—equality of representation, free suffrage, popular election of presidential electors, the free school system—appeal to Perry's heart. "He had confidence in the virtue and integrity of the people, and he loved the Republican principles of our Government, and was devoted to them with the pride and affection of a chevalier and patriot," he wrote.

But, most of all, this closing paragraph of Perry's editorial on Huger seems descriptive of Perry's own political career:

There was a frankness, candor and openness in everything

³⁶ Journal, I, 10.

³⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 58.

³⁸ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, August 31, 1854.

³⁹ Journal, I, 9.

about Judge Huger's actions and thoughts which disqualified him for success in politics, as a mere politician. He could make no bargains and no concessions where principle was involved. He never stopped to consider whether a measure would be popular or not, but whether it was just and right. He scorned all considerations of mere personal popularity and success. . . . We sincerely hope his life will be written, and his character drawn at length, for the benefit of all who may love honor, virtue and patriotism.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, August 31, 1854.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Editor of the Greenville *Mountaineer*

WHILE THE mountain village was pursuing its peaceful way, a storm was brewing in other sections of the state which was finally to burst upon Greenville in full fury. South Carolina, like the other seaboard states of the South, experienced an economic cataclysm during the decade of the 1820's. Thoughtful leaders rightfully attributed it chiefly to the widespread emigration of planters to the virgin lands of the Southwest and the consequent overproduction of cotton. But the populace in general sought a more immediate explanation in the protective tariff, which, by weighing heavily on a staple-exporting section, undoubtedly aggravated their distress. Fiery politicians, orators, and writers—like William Smith, James Hamilton, Thomas Cooper, and Robert J. Turnbull—arose to denounce in scathing terms the abuses of the protective system, asserting that it taxed the South for the benefit of the North. The utterances of the two latter contained open threats of disunion.

South Carolina was departing from the ardent nationalism it had championed under the leadership of Calhoun and McDuffie since the War of 1812. The legislature had adopted Judge Smith's resolutions in remonstrance against the tariff of 1824. The "Tariff of Abominations" in 1828 heightened the storm of protest throughout the state.¹

The up country, with its diversified agriculture, did not feel

¹ Frederic Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement* (New York, 1925), pp. 14-33; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 418-428; David F. Houston, *A Critical Study of Nullification in South Carolina* (New York, 1896), pp. 43-59; John G. Van Deusen, *Economic Bases of Disunion in South Carolina* (New York, 1928), pp. 30-38, 44-45.

the ill effects of the tariff as quickly as did the lowlands. Greenville, because of its prosperous trade from summer visitors and Western drovers, was especially immune. But even Greenville was finally aroused by the tariff of 1828, and in September held a meeting of protest.² A large crowd assembled at a barbecue given principally by Waddy Thompson, who delivered the address and drew up the report and resolutions of the meeting. Perry, having always believed the tariff inexpedient and unfair to the South, was in accord with Thompson, and acted as secretary. He heartily joined in the pledge not to purchase any Northern clothes, Kentucky horses or hogs. Thompson extravagantly declared that "sooner than eat Kentucky meat he would live on *Snow birds*, and would not purchase a Kentucky horse if he had to walk round the circuit!"

Soon afterwards Perry, "dressed in homespun, as a badge of defiance to the Tariff," went to a barbecue and political meeting in Abbeville, where McDuffie made "a speech, not only of great power, but surpassingly beautiful" on the oppressions of the tariff. Citizens throughout the state met and pledged themselves to wear nothing but homespun.³

McDuffie had been slow to enter the anti-tariff agitation, but when once embarked on the crusade, lent the force of his brilliant oratory unstintingly for the cause of extreme state rights. Denouncing the tariff in fiery utterances, he shed his broadcloth coat and gave it to his servant as "fit only for the livery of slaves."⁴ Calhoun, living in the up-country district of Pendleton, had likewise been slow to awaken; and, even then, the dignity of his position as Vice-President required that he take no open part in the controversy. But it was natural that he should secretly assume the intellectual leadership of the movement. Like other farseeing leaders of nullification, he

² J. Mauldin Lesesne, "The Nullification Controversy in an Up-Country District," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1939, pp. 13-14; Houston, *A Critical Study of Nullification*, pp. 46-47.

³ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 37-38.

⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 205; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 50-53.

saw in the growing nationalism of the Federal Government an ultimate danger to slavery interests. Inspired by sincere love for the government, he exerted his brilliant intellect to devise a method of preserving the Union as well as the peculiar interests of his state.⁵ In the fall of 1828, at the request of a committee of the South Carolina House, he embodied his ideas in the "Exposition and Protest," which was printed and circulated by order of the House. In his search for a constitutional solution of the tariff issue, Calhoun had fallen back upon metaphysical reasoning. State sovereignty—a doctrine repeatedly countenanced in the past—was the basis of his argument, and state interposition, or nullification, the remedy he proposed.

The government, according to the "Exposition and Protest," was a compact of sovereign states; the Federal Government was only the agent of the states; a state might declare an act of Congress in palpable violation of the Constitution null and void within the limits of the state; ultimate decision would rest with three fourths of the states, which might either compel the Federal Government to abandon the act or legalize its enforcement by adopting it as an amendment to the United States Constitution.⁶

Soon after the pamphlet was issued, Perry, "without knowing the high source from which it emanated," came out in an editorial against it in the *Mountaineer*,⁷ the Greenville newspaper under the proprietorship of O. H. Wells which had superseded the *Republican* in January, 1829.⁸ Wells, though officially editor as well as owner, practically turned over the editorial column—at least so far as politics was concerned—to

⁵ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 428-430; Houston, *A Critical Study of Nullification*, pp. 61-64.

⁶ Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun*, pp. 374-398; Richard K. Crallé (ed.), *Reports and Public Letters of John C. Calhoun* (New York, 1857), pp. 1-57.

⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 35.

⁸ Lesesne, "The Nullification Controversy in an Up-Country District," *loc. cit.*, p. 13. Wells had been proprietor of the Greenville *Republican* since November, 1827, and had suspended it on August 30, 1828. There was no paper until January (*ibid.*). Perry suggested the name *Mountaineer* (Autobiography, 1874, p. 149).

Perry.⁹ In his opening issue Wells had announced an editorial policy which was perfectly in accord with Perry's: candor and independence, aloofness from party spirit, support of Jackson's administration, condemnation of the protective tariff, and devotion to the Union.¹⁰ Wells remained consistently Unionist, but Perry, though very fond of him, later declared: "He was a very timid man & almost afraid to avow his political sentiments, till he saw that they were popular. He could sail with the current, but not against it."¹¹

Perry, on the other hand, with the buoyant self-confidence of youth, set out to breast the heresy that was sweeping across the state:

We have just seen and hastily looked over the Exposition of the Tariff, adopted at the last session of our Legislature, and now published in a pamphlet of 44 pages. It is certainly an able and powerful statement of our wrongs and injuries, and does credit to the talents and patriotism of those who drew it. But we cannot, however, notwithstanding the ability with which it is executed, concur in some of its conclusions with regard to the power of the several State Legislatures to control the proceedings of Congress. We have always been of the opinion . . . that it was the intention of the Federal Constitution, to make the General Government, in a great measure, independent of the State Governments. . . . In fact, it does seem to us, that no candid and unprejudiced mind can read the debates and proceedings of the Convention, which framed our Constitution, without seeing clearly that it was the open and avowed object of the greater part of the members, to have the General Government so constituted that the States could not clog or check its proceedings. But that there might be some controlling power over this Government, some arbiter between its proceedings and that of the States, they wisely established the Federal Judiciary for this purpose. This tribunal has the power to declare a law of Congress unconstitutional, null and void, and to keep both the State and General Governments within their respective provinces. If this power of declaring a law of Congress unconstitutional and void, were lodged in the State Legislatures, our government would

⁹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 35.

¹⁰ *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 10, 1829.

¹¹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 226.

be precisely such as it was under the articles of the old confederation. It would be entirely discretionary with the States whether any national law or measure should be carried into effect. . . . Indeed this power in the State Legislature would reduce all the proceedings of Congress to nothing more than mere recommendations for *their* adoption!¹²

The year 1829 was one of lull before the storm, as the majority of South Carolinians were expecting the amelioration of the tariff by Jackson and the new Congress. The Nullifiers, however, were steadily entrenching their forces, preparing, if the tariff were not lowered, to launch into a campaign to elect legislative candidates who would call a state convention to enforce their doctrine.¹³ Since Perry hoped for a reduction of the tariff, he made the chief point of his attack the oppressive effect of the exorbitant duties on the Southern states. The tariff was "clearly within the letter of the Constitution," he admitted, but "a violation of the true meaning and spirit of that instrument," since it sacrificed the great interests of a very large section of the United States. "The law may be no violation of the Constitution," he declared, "and yet this will neither lessen nor diminish the amount of tribute we are paying for the support of Northern manufacturers."¹⁴

There was as yet no bitter partisan spirit in the state, though the Nullification and Union parties were gradually being formed. The Fourth of July celebration in Greenville was a happy event, without factionalism. Soon after he wrote his editorial against the "Exposition and Protest," Perry had heard from Pierce M. Butler that Calhoun was the author of the document, though the fact was not generally known for two years thereafter. His toast on this occasion, therefore, was to his new, not his old, idol: "*Judge Huger*—In the bosom of this man may be found the true, genuine and original South Carolina character."¹⁵

¹² *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 21, 1829.

¹³ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 430, 434; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, p. 55.

¹⁴ *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 17, 1829.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, July 11, 1829; Autobiography, 1849, p. 35.

II

The dormant party enmity in South Carolina burst into full bloom in the election year 1830. The famous Webster-Hayne debate in Congress focused attention on the nullification theory, and Webster's immortal peroration gave inspiration to the Unionists. Perry formally took over the editorial department of the *Mountaineer* on January 16, 1830, changing the title of the paper to the *Greenville Mountaineer*. He was already known as an able and indefatigable Unionist leader, and his assumption of the editorial chair was a dangerous challenge to the Nullifier press of the state. He became "the leading Unionist editor outside Charleston," and the *Mountaineer* the greatest obstacle to the spread of nullification in the up country.¹⁶

Perry was entering upon the stormiest period of his career. In assuming the leadership of the Unionist forces in Greenville, he was deliberately setting himself in opposition to all the prominent politicians of the district, and to nearly all his friends. Warren R. Davis, congressman from the Greenville-Pendleton district since 1824, a man of great popularity, was an ardent champion of nullification. Baylis Earle, elected circuit judge in 1830, used the prestige of his office, and Waddy Thompson his consummate skill as politician, to win Greenville to the cause. And Vice-President Calhoun of Pendleton was exerting his powerful sway over his home district—secretly, it is true, but Perry knew that he would have to combat Calhoun.¹⁷

A month before he assumed editorial management of the *Mountaineer*, Perry issued a prospectus announcing the change and outlining his policy:

The politics of this paper will be such as Southern interests require, and Southern feelings would dictate. The Editor will, on all politi-

¹⁶ *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 16, 1830; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 430-436.

¹⁷ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 302-306; Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living*, II, 583; Lesesne, "The Nullification Controversy in an Up-Country District," *loc. cit.*, pp. 13-15.

cal questions, make up, and avow with candor and frankness his sentiments, without regard to party. In matters of opinion, he will pay due respect at all times to the *vox populi*; but in no case shall it ever influence him contrary to the convictions of his own conscience.¹⁸

When the first issue appeared on January 16, 1830, beneath the caption was the motto, "*Pro Patria.*" In his "Editorial Address" Perry announced his "political principles, feelings and opinions." First, he reiterated his independence—he would not sacrifice his political opinions for the sake of popularity or patronage. Next, he disclaimed any intention of becoming a factionist for any party; he would serve no other flag than that of his country. His views, he thought, were in accord with "the great mass of persons in the upper country." He then dwelt on the two cardinal principles of his creed—democracy and unionism:

We have ever been from our youth the ardent and devoted admirers of a free representative republic. There has always been implanted in our bosom, a deep rooted love of democratic principles, which no time nor circumstance can extinguish. Our earliest political recollections are, a thorough belief in the "divine right" of the people. . . .

The next dearest and earliest object of our thoughts, is the union of these United States. Cemented as it was "in the times that tried men's souls," by the life's blood of our forefathers, we should consider ourselves worse than a sacrilegious parricide, were we to attempt its dissolution, or countenance the political miscreant who wantonly does. Nothing but the dire necessity of doing so to preserve our Republican Government, can ever reconcile an idea so monstrous and so fraught with horrid calamity.

As to the specific political controversies—the tariff, nullification, state sovereignty—which were dividing the state, he wrote:

The present Tariff is an unjust, oppressive, and most iniquitous system of legislation, taking from the honest industry of agriculture and giving to the speculating capitalist of manufactures. It is a palpable fraud upon the Constitution. . . .

¹⁸ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 12, 19, 1829.

In opposition to the Tariff, we shall not fail to exert, with a constant and fixed determination of purpose, all the humble influence in our power. We are not, however, disposed, although the provocation be galling to our feelings, to adopt the "ultima ratio"—but rather prefer "suffering whilst evils are sufferable."—We still "hope and trust in the returning good sense and justice of the American people." . . .

This free, wise and beautiful system of Government under which we live, is emphatically a complex scheme of civil polity. . . . The *sovereign power* is here divided between the people of the respective States, the several State Legislatures, and the Congress of the United States. . . . But to call either the State authorities, or the people of any State an independent sovereignty, in the true sense of the word, is unquestionably a misnomer. . . . The consolidation of all power in the general government on the one hand, and the disunion of the several states on the other, are equally fatal to the liberty of America. . . . The Federal Judiciary is the great arbiter between the national and state governments.

Turning aside from the tariff question, he pronounced another feature of the "American System" unconstitutional—internal improvements by Congress, denying that the power was given in the "general welfare" clause.

Of special significance in the "Editorial Address" is the paragraph concerning slavery. Undoubtedly, one of the chief fears of the advocates of nullification was the eventual interference of a consolidated Federal Government with the peculiar institution of the South. Even Perry was ready for resistance in such an eventuality:

Any interference, on the part of the general government, with regard to an important *species of property* in the Southern country, would be such a glaring instance of usurpation as should be met at its threshold by every Carolinian. We do not believe, however, that so signal an instance of usurpation and fanaticism, is at all to be apprehended from the national government.

Throughout the year Perry pursued his independent course, pouring forth editorials denouncing the Nullifiers and pleading for the Union. In April he published some letters he had

received, with replies. One from "Amicus" is especially expressive:

Mr. Editor—I am a particular friend of yours, and feel a deep interest in the success of your paper. I hope therefore, a few words of advice will not be offensive. You want prudence and tact in your editorial articles. I like to see an Editor frank and independent; but you are a little *upwards* of independent. You express your sentiments very often, when you know them to be unpopular, and when there is no necessity for coming out. . . . Take the advice of a friend and use a little more policy. Be not quite so dogmatical in your opinions, and pay a little more deference to public sentiments.

To which the self-reliant young editor replied:

Friend—Your advice will not do. We might, by following it succeed for a time; but in the end, we should certainly fail. An open, straight forward course is the only one that will carry an Editor through life reputably. Whenever he neglects to express his sentiments, because they are unpopular, the people will begin to lose confidence in him. We hold it to be the duty of an Editor to correct public opinion when he knows it to be wrong. . . .¹⁹

In spite of occasional critics, the subscription list of the *Mountaineer* was continuously increasing. Perry's unionist editorials found a receptive soil in the district of Greenville, with its diversified economic interests. But the Nullifiers were rapidly spreading their propaganda over the up country; they hoped by fall to elect a legislature with a two-thirds Nullifier majority, and thus secure the convention call. Throughout the spring and summer Perry labored to refute their arguments. His program was distinctly that of a *Southern Unionist*: the tariff he denounced as oppressive to the South, since it rendered the agricultural classes tributary to the manufacturing; but constantly he urged forbearance, hailing the removal of the duty on salt and molasses as hopeful evidence that the tariff would gradually fall; nullification, the remedy proposed by the extremists, he arraigned as a doctrine so absurd that it

¹⁹ April 17, 1830.

could result only in hopeless anarchy or a dissolution of the Union. He insisted that the Federal Judiciary was the arbiter of all questions arising between the national and state governments. To deny its power, he declared, was "the worst of all political heresies," fraught with disunion; the government would become worse than "a rope of sand."²⁰

In spite of his firm stand against nullification, Perry had become more Southern and more state rights since he first ventured into journalism. When he wrote for the *Greenville Republican* in 1826, he had gone all the way with the nationalists on internal improvements. After his editorials of 1830 he was taunted for having abandoned his former platform, and replied that he had recently read the secret debates in the Federal Convention and found that the power of Congress to construct military and post roads had been rejected. As for the tariff, he had not changed, but had "grown a little *warmer*."²¹ Though a Unionist, Perry was certainly no consolidationist. When the famous toasts of Jackson and Calhoun were given at the Jefferson birthday dinner, he wrote in the *Mountaineer*: "We are proud to see that Mr. Calhoun had the firmness and independence to say on that occasion, *Liberty* was our *first*, and *Union* our *second* consideration."²²

Other prominent citizens of Greenville, however, were not so hopeful as Perry of securing a readjustment of the tariff by peaceful means. At the Fourth of July celebration the inflammable nature of many of the toasts brought the situation to the public view. Perry offered on this occasion: "The present Crisis: 'Moderation and forbearance'—'Internal Improvement is prostrate'—'the Tariff has been touched and must fall'—'the truth will prevail'—'the good sense of the American people will return.' 'Liberty, the Constitution and the Union' forever." But Waddy Thompson gave a sternly modified toast to the Union: "The Union: As it was left us by our ancestors, no patriot would calculate its value. But from the union, as it

²⁰ January 30, February 27, April 3, 23, May 7, 21, June 11, July 16, 30, September 10, October 22, 29, November 12, 1830.

²¹ September 17, 1830.

²² May 7, 1830.

has been made by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, every Southern patriot must fervently say, Good Lord deliver us." Perry's friend Dr. Henry H. Townes spoke in similar strain. Only Benajah Dunham supported Perry in the unshaken loyalty of his offering: "The Union: Cemented by the best blood of our ancestors; what patriot will pretend to estimate its value."

Perry commented editorially:

It will be seen after reading these toasts that some of them have an awful squinting at war, revolution, and suits for a partition of the republic. Ten years since many of these toasts would have been considered treasonable in their tendency at a public dinner. . . . But although the people of South Carolina have such grounds of complaint against the National Government, we believe that they are attached to it by ties which can be severed with difficulty. We know that the mass of citizens in Greenville, the hardy yeomanry of the mountains, the bone and sinew of government, are far, very far, from being in a revolutionary state. They feel, and are sensible of their wrongs; but they are disposed to exercise patience and forbearance.²³

Perry was right—the yeomanry of Greenville were far from being in a revolutionary state. As the legislative campaign reached its height, it became evident that the nullification candidates were too revolutionary for their mountain constituency. The nullification leaders in the state had skilfully made the issue the call of a convention, keeping nullification in the background and dubbing those who opposed a convention submissionists.²⁴ Perry launched an editorial campaign for the election of "No Convention" men, calling upon the electorate to demand an explicit statement from their candidates. Convention and nullification were synonymous, he said—there could be no purpose in calling a convention except for "nullifying an act of Congress, which must either result in disunion, or render the federal compact unworthy of being preserved."²⁵

²³ July 9, 1830.

²⁴ Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 91-92.

²⁵ July 23, May 21, 1830.

1830 The issue came out into the open at a public dinner given in the Greenville Hotel on July 28 in honor of Warren Davis. In his address, the congressman made an impassioned plea for the call of a convention. He spoke of the "depression and desolation" of the South, resulting from the "unholy conspiracy" between East and West, and called for resistance:

Where then are we to look for redress? At home! To ourselves—To the sovereign State of S. Carolina. . . . Shall I be asked if I have no attachment and love and veneration for the Federal Union, the Federal Government, the Federal Constitution? I have, my friends, none to boast of. . . . I have no . . . hymns of praise for a Government that forces us to feel that it is alien to us; for a Government that we only feel and know by its exactions and oppressions. . . .

He ended with a toast to McDuffie, and various other toasts were offered—several for resistance and convention. Perry, when called upon for a sentiment, observed that he unfortunately differed in his political principles from most of his friends at the board; he knew his native state was oppressed, grievously and wantonly oppressed; but he did not believe in the power of a state to nullify an act of Congress—he believed there was no difference between nullification and a secession from the Union. He expressed himself as emphatically opposed to calling a convention. Present at the dinner were several legislative candidates, among them the incumbents—Waddy Thompson, William Butler, and Tandy Walker—very popular men in Greenville who ordinarily would have been re-elected with little opposition. Before the meeting was over Thompson and Butler expressed themselves in favor of a convention as "the only right and proper remedy."

The sentiments expressed at the Davis dinner created a turmoil in Greenville. "With a perfect unanimity of feeling," averred Perry, "the people cried out in all parts of the district, 'no Convention.'" Perry wrote a strong editorial urging all the legislative candidates to give a frank exposition of their political opinions, as candidates in other districts had done.²⁶

²⁶ July 30, August 6, 1830.

A few days later the excitement reached its height when a crowd gathered in front of the Greenville Hotel for the purpose of hearing from their legislative candidates. Thompson first addressed the assembled throng in an impassioned recitation of their wrongs and an urgent plea for a convention as the only remedy. "You are walking in your sleep on the brink of that precipice over which the liberties of every other people have been dashed," he warned. At the conclusion of his address, he announced his withdrawal from the race.

I well know that these opinions are not now the opinions of the District; that there is an overwhelming current against them which cannot be turned back. . . . God send you a safe deliverance from the threatening dangers of your situation. I can take no agency, voluntary or other, in riveting your chains upon you.

Dr. Butler and Tandy Walker addressed the excited sales-day crowd in similar strain, and also retired from the race, on the ground that they could not conscientiously represent the will of their constituents. The "Non-Convention" candidates, John H. Harrison and Wilson Cobb, then made addresses, contending that the tariff would melt away as public opinion became enlightened and that nullification was "ipso facto, a dissolution of the Union." Perry, reporting the tumultuous meeting a few days later, spoke with admiration of the "independence and frankness" shown by the three most prominent candidates and expressed his regret at losing their services. "Attached to them by the strongest ties of friendship, we differ only in politics," he wrote.²⁷

After Waddy Thompson withdrew, he still electioneered in the district—not for himself, he averred, "but for those great principles upon which I confidently believe your liberties and union depend." Toward the latter part of August Perry attended a political meeting at Toney's Old Fields, where Thompson made a dramatic plea for a convention, hoping to secure the endorsement of his opinions and a renomination of Butler, Walker, and himself for the legislature. But the people

²⁷ August 6, 13, 1830.

could not be converted and earnestly entreated Perry to reply. When he did so, Thompson took offense.²⁸

On August 28 a similar meeting was held at Bruton's Old Fields, where Judge Earle called for a convention, but deprecated all talk of nullification and disunion. Perry was then asked to give his side of the question. He admitted the oppressions of the tariff, but declared that its injurious effects had been greatly exaggerated.

In fact, our country never was really more prosperous and happy than it is at present, all the provisions and necessities of life are cheaper than they ever were, and of less misery and wretchedness, no people can boast. . . .

After admitting the Tariff to be injurious, oppressive and an infraction of the constitution, it will be asked what is to be done? Are we to submit like cowards, or shall we right ourselves like freemen? I answer it is neither cowardly nor unbecoming freemen to have patience and forbearance with the government of their own choice. . . .

The tariff was not "a palpable violation of the federal constitution," he argued. Lowering of duties already showed decline of the system. Moreover, any action now would be rash, as South Carolina did not have the co-operation of the other Southern states. "If they can bear and forbear, cannot we do so likewise?"

He warned against the idea of calling a convention merely to remonstrate to the Federal Government and solicit other states to do the same, as suggested by Judge Earle. If a convention were called, nullification would be its only purpose; and nullification was synonymous with disunion. Never would he vote for a convention until evils were insufferable and the issue was fairly presented, "disunion or submission."²⁹

In spite of Perry's strong speech, the meeting nominated the "Convention" candidates for the legislature—Thompson, Walker, and Butler—by a small majority. A week before their re-entry, Perry had boasted that not one hundred men in

²⁸ *Greenville Mountaineer*, August 27, 1830; Autobiography, 1849, p. 38.

²⁹ *Greenville Mountaineer*, September 3, 1830.

Greenville District favored a convention; but when the election occurred in October, many "Non-Convention" voters warmly supported these popular men, and the result was much closer than expected. The three "Non-Convention" candidates were elected by a safe majority—Cobb, 1,256; Major Micajah Berry, 992; Harrison, 970; but the "Convention" candidates received a very considerable vote—Thompson, 716; Walker, 547; Butler, 515.³⁰

The returns from other sections of the state indicated that the Nullifiers would probably have a majority in the new legislature. Most up-country districts had gone Unionist; but Pendleton, the other half of Greenville's congressional district, had elected all "Convention" candidates. In Charleston eleven "Non-Convention" candidates were elected—among them Huger, Legaré, and Poinsett—and five "Convention." Petigru was defeated for the South Carolina Senate by the "Convention" candidate, Richard Cunningham. The contest had been heated in Charleston, and the Unionist leaders, who later were to take the initiative in forming a strong state organization to oppose the Nullifiers, had worked in close concert against a convention. Poinsett, who had returned from his ministry in Mexico in February, had hastened from Washington to Charleston in May to lend his aid; like Perry, he felt that nullification would endanger the very existence of the Union.³¹ There were three strong Unionist newspapers in Charleston: the *Courier*, the *Southern Patriot*, and the *City Gazette*, the last edited by William Gilmore Simms.³² A year or two later Richard Yeadon, a prominent young Charleston lawyer who had contributed articles against nullification to the *City Gazette*, became a valued editorial writer for the *Courier*, and coproprietor in 1833.³³

³⁰ *Ibid.*, August 27, October 15, 22, 1830; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 38-39.

³¹ *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 8, 22, 1830; J. Fred Rippey, Joel R. Poinsett, *Versatile American* (Durham, N. C., 1935), pp. 134-136; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 208.

³² Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 93-96; Van Deusen, *Economic Bases of Disunion in South Carolina*, p. 50.

³³ "Memoir of Richard Yeadon, Esq.," *American Whig Review*, XXVIII (May, 1850), 477-482; Perry Pamphlets, XXXII.

Perry visited Columbia, as was his custom, during the session of the legislature, and witnessed the stirring debates over the call of a convention. The Nullifiers were in a majority in both houses and easily elected their candidates: for governor, James Hamilton, and for United States senator, Stephen D. Miller. In the House William C. Preston led the fight of the Nullifiers for a convention call, and the fiery Rhett was on the Committee on Federal Relations that framed the resolutions. Daniel E. Huger became the bulwark of the Unionists in the debates that ensued.³⁴ Perry was thrilled to hear his hero speak against the resolutions for two and a half hours on December 8 and for three hours the following day. His arguments, declared Perry, were "powerful, triumphant, and conclusive," and his manner showed "earnestness," cool deliberation," and devoted love of country. On December 10 Preston spoke for two hours in reply to Huger, and for one and a half hours on December 11. Perry was enthralled by his brilliant oratory: "His speech, from beginning to end, was a most powerful and eloquent one. . . . Never did I listen with a more thrilling effect to the speech of any one. Col. Preston is certainly an able debater, and would be distinguished in any legislative body in the world."³⁵

It was an exciting session. When Huger taunted the Nullifiers with deceiving the people by not stating their purpose as nullification in the convention call, Rhett pointed his finger at him and said he despised the man who endeavored to scare the people with nullification. Huger immediately sent a challenge. A duel would have ensued except for Rhett's public apology next day.³⁶ The Nullifiers passed the resolutions in both houses, but only by a bare majority instead of the necessary two thirds. The convention danger was over for another year.

Returning to Greenville, Perry wrote in the *Mountaineer*

³⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 208-209; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 10, 17, 1830; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 21-22.

³⁵ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 17, 1830.

³⁶ White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 21-22; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), p. 94.

that the legislative session had been "the most interesting period of his life." In Columbia he had met for the first time Judge William Smith, against whom he had been greatly prejudiced since boyhood because of his state rights creed. But strange was the new alignment of parties in the state! Smith, the state rights chieftain of the twenties, had come out in a strong article against a convention and nullification in the *Yorkville Pioneer* in November; and Perry had hailed his accession to the Union ranks with rejoicing, publishing the whole of his "able and profound exposition" in the *Mountaineer*.³⁷ Now the old nationalist chieftains—Calhoun, McDuffie, and Hamilton—were triumphantly leading the state in the most extreme state rights doctrine, and Smith had lost his seat in the United States Senate because the people had passed far beyond him in his creed!

III

Party strife grew more and more bitter during 1831, and the press assumed a role of increasing importance. Realizing the great influence exerted by the *Greenville Mountaineer*, prominent Unionists over the state contributed to its support. Judge Smith donated fifty dollars; so did Judge Huger and others, at the solicitation of John H. Harrison, Greenville member of the House.³⁸

Since the Nullifiers had not won in 1830 by keeping nullification in the background, they came out boldly for the doctrine in 1831. There was little chance of securing a convention call until a new legislature was elected in 1832, but the leaders kept up excitement to prepare the state for action. Governor Hamilton, whom Perry considered "the greatest partizan leader in the world," instigated the "State Rights and Free Trade Associations," which were organized in all the districts and aroused popular enthusiasm by colorful parades, elaborate dinners, exhibitions, and fancy balls. The Unionists had no state organization in 1831, and thus could not compete with

³⁷ November 12, December 24, 1830; *Journal*, I, 12.

³⁸ *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 140.

the Nullifiers in popular appeal. The Unionist press, however, was bold in attack, arraigning the "Jacobin Clubs" as revolutionary.³⁹

The Greenville *Mountaineer* was discontinued by Wells on January 15, 1831, since he hoped to find better financial prospects in another district. But earnest entreaties and assurances of an increased subscription list induced him to resume the paper on May 14. Perry bade his subscribers a rather gloomy farewell in the January issue:

With my motto for a guide, I have separated from those for whom I always have and always shall entertain the very highest regard. I went with them as long as I thought they were on the right road, and no longer. . . .

In leaving my post I have nothing to regret, save that the contest, in which I have been so deeply engaged, is not yet over. The life of an Editor is an unpleasant one. . . .

I say the contest is not yet over: would to God it were. When it will be and what will be its consequences no one can tell. I greatly fear they may be such as no patriot would like to witness.⁴⁰

When Perry resumed the editorial chair on May 14, he changed the motto from "*Pro Patria*" to a more forceful quotation from Washington's *Farewell Address*: "It is of Infinite Moment That You Should Properly Estimate the Immense Value of Your National Union." He announced that he would never have subjected himself again to "the trouble and mortification necessarily attending the life of an Editor" had he not felt it his duty to aid his country in the "alarming crisis" which threatened it; he pled for moderation and tolerance. "We impugn not the motives of those who advocate the 'Carolina doctrine,' however fraught with danger we may conceive it to be," he magnanimously declared. "We believe that the leading men of the new 'States Right Party' are honest, virtuous, talented and patriotic." He regretted the excitement and party

³⁹ Chauncey S. Boucher, *The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina* (Chicago, 1916), pp. 112, 121-133, 154; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, p. 97; Journal, I, 31; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 210.

⁴⁰ January 15, May 14, 1831.

feeling. The people were all opposed to the tariff, and differed only in the mode and measure of redress. If only they would unite on tenable grounds, South Carolina could present a formidable front. He thus appealed to the Nullifiers:

We are sure that the advocates of *Nullification* do not apprehend those dangers from these doctrines that we do, or they would abandon them. . . . But is it not enough to make them pause and reflect when they know that such men as Judge Huger, Judge Smith, Col. Drayton, Judge Richardson, Chancellor Desaussure, Judge David Johnson, Judge William Johnson, Judge O'Neill, Judge Lee, Governor Manning, Governor Bennett, Col. Taylor, Joel R. Poinsett, James L. Petigru, Hugh S. Legare, and many others, distinguished alike for their virtues, talents, patriotism, and public services, not only regard them as dangerous political heresies, but as the very seeds of disunion, discord and revolution. . . . It is to be hoped that the day has not yet come when the warning counsel of the purest and best men of our country is to be set at naught. . . .

After all that has been said about our distresses and our grievances, our poverty and our oppressions, our high taxes and our manifold injuries, where is there a people so free, so happy and so prosperous as we are? . . .

As summer approached, McDuffie and Calhoun became the open champions of nullification. McDuffie made a three-hour speech in favor of the doctrine at a dinner in Charleston on May 19. Calhoun, returning to Fort Hill after his break with Jackson, issued a letter to the *Pendleton Messenger* on July 26 in which he reiterated the doctrine contained in his "Exposition and Protest" of 1828.⁴¹ Perry joined in the chorus of Unionist editors attacking his two former heroes. He assailed vehemently McDuffie's thesis that South Carolina had the right of resistance by nullification and his comparison of those who opposed it with the Tories of '76. The only proper question to submit to the people of South Carolina, he insisted, was "*Revolution or Submission*. . . . Is it preferable to bear with the Tariff, or is it better to dissolve the Union? Shall we resort

⁴¹ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 136-138; *Pendleton Messenger*, August 3, 1831.

to revolution, or shall we remain *in status quo*?" As for McDuffie's dubbing the Unionists Tories, he challenged: "Show us *ten* revolutionary soldiers, and we will warrant that *nine* of them are opposed to Convention and Nullification."⁴² Calhoun's Fort Hill letter was noticed only briefly by Perry, who stated that it was "a very able and dignified defence of the Carolina doctrine." His respectful attitude contrasts significantly with abusive and sarcastic attacks upon it by other Unionist editors—among them the editor of the *Columbia Free Press and Hive*.⁴³

On the Fourth of July rival party celebrations were held in Charleston. A great Nullifier rally heard brilliant orations by Robert Y. Hayne and Governor Hamilton. But the Unionist celebration far outshone that of the Nullifiers. William Drayton, Hugh S. Legaré, and Petigru matched Hayne in eloquence; however, the high light of the meeting was the sudden disclosure of a letter from President Jackson to Poinsett, announcing his determination to suppress any attempt at nullification or disunion. From then on, the Unionists ardently supported Jackson for re-election, and the Nullifiers opposed him.⁴⁴

Perry had championed Jackson even before his letter. In May he had written in the *Mountaineer*:

We look to the re-election of General Jackson as of more importance to this country than any Presidential election which has ever preceded it. Every man who loves this Union, and who has any regard for the prosperity of this government, should make all the exertions in his power to insure this great event.

He acknowledged that he had preferred Adams four years before, but now thought that Jackson had the confidence of the American people, and was "most admirably suited to the times." Throughout the summer he urged support of the

⁴² Greenville *Mountaineer*, June 4, 1831.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, August 20, 1831; Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, p. 138.

⁴⁴ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 149-154; Greenville *Mountaineer*, July 16, 23, 30, 1831; Theodore D. Jervay, *Robert Y. Hayne and His Times* (New York, 1909), pp. 287-290; Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, p. 137.

President. "The *crisis* calls loudly for General Jackson, and we think the American people will respond to the call."⁴⁵

In 1831 the Unionists of Greenville were still holding the ascendancy over the Nullifiers. No doubt the *Mountaineer* was a powerful factor in preventing inroads of the "State Rights and Free Trade" clubs. Certain it was that Perry embodied the sentiments of a large majority of the citizens of Greenville. He was chosen to deliver the oration at their Fourth of July celebration, which was made a gala occasion.⁴⁶ As in his recent editorials, his central theme was a plea for toleration and forbearance—an earnest entreaty to lay aside party strife for the preservation of the Union. He spoke of their glorious common heritage, and the inestimable benefits that flowed from being governed by "the most perfect system of civil policy that the wisdom of man can invent." Pointing out the disasters that would follow dismemberment of the Union, he asked:

Shall we take up arms against our kindred and the compatriots of our fathers! Forbid it ye spirits of '76! Shall we fight to destroy that Union which our fathers fought to establish! Forbid it thou great Ruler of the universe! Let not our hands be stained with the blood of our brethren!⁴⁷

⁴⁵ May 28, September 3, 1831.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, June 11, July 2, 9, 1831.

⁴⁷ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 47-64.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Editor Turns Duelist

THOUGH PERRY was pursuing a courteous and moderate editorial policy, the mounting animosity between parties finally involved him in a series of bitter personal altercations, which he later deeply regretted. Many years afterwards he wrote:

In 1829 I took charge of the *Greenville Mountaineer* & with that Paper commenced all of my early difficulties & differences with my fellow men. It was, in many respects, a most unfortunate connection or enterprise for me. On the other hand it gave me some reputation, made me known to the people & endeared me to a portion of them.

Perry's position in Greenville was especially trying, since all his friends of prominence were Nullifiers. Being very sensitive as well as high-tempered, he inevitably came into serious conflict with them. As an uncompromising Unionist editor and public speaker, he was a target for attack by Nullifier editors and politicians.¹ Over forty years later he wrote of these experiences in his *Autobiography*:

This is a painful subject to touch, but I do not think I am at liberty to pass over it in silence whilst writing a candid & full sketch of my life. There was no one who wished more earnestly to live in peace with his fellow men than myself. But I was in early life passionate & resentful & as tenacious of my honor as a lady could be of her virtue. I disliked anything unfair & was too much prone to denounce it. It would have been well for me through

¹ *Autobiography*, 1849, pp. 35, 41. Perry did not formally become editor until January, 1830 (*Greenville Mountaineer*, January 16, 1830).

life if I had . . . refused to notice many things that were said reflecting on my character and motives. But when I commenced public life I thought if I permitted one insult to pass unnoticed it would provoke others.²

A coolness had existed between him and Waddy Thompson ever since he had challenged Thompson's arguments for a convention at Toney's Old Fields. At a regimental review in the same place some time later, General Ware, on whose staff Perry was serving as major, delivered a strong Unionist speech. Thompson addressed the crowd in refutation, whereupon Perry strongly defended Ware's position. Warm words ensued, and the difficulty came to a head in court when Thompson pronounced a statement of Perry's false. After fruitlessly demanding a retraction, Perry wrote a challenge and gave it to his friend Perry Duncan to deliver to Thompson. On his way Duncan met David L. Wardlaw, who persuaded him not to deliver the note that evening, as the difficulty could be adjusted next day.³

Accordingly, Thompson announced in court the following morning that he had been misunderstood, that he had not intended to impute a wilful untruth to Perry, who was incapable of such a thing. The explanation was regarded as satisfactory by Judge John S. Richardson, who was presiding, and the matter ended. This was fortunate, as Perry later realized: "I was then a young man & had scarcely ever fired a pistol in my life. I knew nothing of the etiquette in such matters, and acted only from the dictates of my own sense of propriety."⁴

II

Perry did not give himself time to study the etiquette of dueling before becoming involved in another controversy. This time it was an editorial tilt with Dr. Frederick W. Symmes, editor of the Pendleton *Messenger*, a deadly rival of

² Autobiography, 1874, p. 153.

³ Autobiography, 1849, p. 41; Autobiography, 1874, p. 161; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 166-168.

⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 41.

the *Mountaineer*. Pendleton District was all out for nullification, and Symmes a staunch supporter of Calhoun.⁵ In the *Messenger* of June 8, 1831, he challenged Perry's statement that not one of the ten or fifteen Revolutionary soldiers he knew in Greenville and Pendleton districts was for the Carolina doctrine. Symmes asserted that he knew as much about Pendleton as any "non-resident," having lived there since infancy; and that he could point out more than one in ten of the patriots of the Revolution who were in favor of a convention.

We know several who fought under the venerable Sumter, the Game Cock of the Revolution, who yet, with him, hate tyranny as they did in the olden time, and who would resist it, even unto death. . . . We return our thanks to the editor of the *Mountaineer*, for giving what, we have no doubt, he thinks a favourable account of our district, but take leave to decline the compliment.

In the next issue of the *Mountaineer*, Perry reminded Symmes that he himself was a native of Pendleton and knew the Revolutionary soldiers. He then made a thrust at Symmes, who had been a strong Unionist until the preceding summer, but after the return of Warren Davis from Congress had swung to the advocacy of a convention and written an article approving the course of Davis—"directly in the teeth of what he had so often said before in his Paper."⁶ There was a strong insinuation in Perry's editorial remarks:

Quere, Mr. Editor—would you have declined the compliment previous to the commencement of the electioneering campaign in your district last summer? . . . You were once regarded by your readers as being opposed to those principles which you now so staunchly maintain. We once heard you told of your political somerset, by a gentleman who ought to know your former creed. Until the return of our Representative from Congress, late last spring was a year, we never saw any thing under the editorial head of your paper against the Tariff. Previous to that time all of your remarks on this subject would induce the belief that you were in

⁵ Simpson, *History of Old Pendleton District*, p. 24; *Pendleton Messenger*, April 6, 1831; *Greenville Mountaineer*, April 21, 1848.

⁶ June 18, 1831; *Autobiography*, 1874, pp. 156-157.

favor of its constitutionality, and had no serious objections to its policy.

He gave a number of extracts from Symmes's editorials in the *Messenger* during 1829 and the early months of 1830 to show that there was then nothing of "that anti-tariff spirit which would now cause you to 'resist tyranny even under death.'"⁷

Symmes, resenting the attack, wrote a long editorial in reply. As to his consistency, he claimed as much as politicians could generally boast. He proceeded to quote extracts from May, 1828, through August, 1830, to prove that his stand on the tariff had been consistent. As a matter of fact, he had changed from a mild deprecation of the impolicy of the tariff in 1828 and 1829, to a denunciation of it as wantonly oppressive to the South and contrary to the spirit of the Constitution in July and August, 1830, and finally to advocacy of a convention as the remedy.

Lastly he passed "with real regret" to the paragraph in Perry's editorial containing the innuendo about Davis's influence. In all his editorial skirmishes, Symmes averred, he had endeavored to preserve a decorous deportment and to make no charges of dishonorable conduct. Davis was well known to be his personal friend, but they had differed as often as they had agreed on political questions. Quoting the offending paragraph, he replied:

To this there can be but one reply. *If* Mr. Perry means to insinuate, as it appears to us he does, that we are governed in our course by any extraneous influence, or that we follow implicitly the opinions of any man, of whatever rank or character, then we are under the necessity of pronouncing him guilty of an absolute falsehood.⁸

Perry made no editorial response, for he thought "the charge of falsehood required to be replied to in another way." Again he sent his loyal friend Perry Duncan with a challenge

⁷ June 18, 1831.

⁸ Pendleton *Messenger*, June 22, 1831.

to Symmes unless he retracted the offensive language. In the note Perry stated that he had intended in his article in the *Mountaineer* to prove Symmes's inconsistency, but had made no charge as to the motives which had induced his change. Symmes replied through Duncan that he did not hesitate to make the retraction after reading Perry's note; but he declined to publish the correspondence as Duncan requested, on the ground that it would give undue notoriety to the matter. "The truth was," wrote Perry many years later, "that the whole correspondence was not in accordance with Etiquette or the code of honor. I should not have sent a conditional challenge & the Dr. ought not to have retracted under a threat of challenge. I knew nothing at that time of the punctillious Etiquette of duellists."⁹

Symmes, however, did publish an editorial in the next issue of the *Pendleton Messenger*, disregarding the challenge, but giving the other contents of Perry's note:

Since our last we have received a communication from Mr. Perry of the *Greenville Mountaineer* in which he says that nothing was further from his intention than to impute to us any dishonorable conduct, or to cast any reflection on the honest character of our press. That he did not intend to insinuate that we followed implicitly the opinions of any man, or that we were improperly influenced in any way by the representative from this district. Our concluding remarks in last Wednesday's paper, which it will be remembered were qualified by Mr. Perry's meaning, of course cannot apply to him, and we take pleasure in saying so.¹⁰

A few days later Perry wrote an editorial to let the public know that he had vindicated his honor, but at the same time he spoke generously of Symmes:

The *Pendleton Messenger* last week made a retort on the Editor of this paper, which he felt himself bound to reply to through the medium of a friend, and although the misunderstanding has been explained and adjusted to the entire satisfaction of both parties, we deem it due the character of Doctor Symmes to make the following statement.

⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 157.

¹⁰ June 29, 1831.

He then gave the substance of his note to Symmes, explaining that he had always believed there was a change in the tone of the *Messenger* the past summer, and supposed the editor might have been influenced, as many others were, by the opinions and conversations of Mr. Davis. He quoted the offending paragraph of his editorial and stated that he "neither intended to say or insinuate any thing more."¹¹

III

A week or so after the affair with Symmes had been amicably settled, an article appeared in the Pendleton *Messenger* signed "A Friend" assailing Perry as being more inconsistent in his political principles than Symmes. It began incisively:

Dr. Symmes—The Editor of the "Mountaineer" in his paper of the 18th ult. makes an unprovoked attack on what he pleases to call the inconsistency of your present and former opinions. . . . Unfortunately for the Editor, he early had a propensity to write for the newspaper, and the vanity to believe his crude notions about men and things, could influence public opinion.

The writer proceeded to quote from Perry's articles in the *Republican* and *Mountaineer* of 1826-1828 to prove his contention, sarcastically requesting the editor of the *Mountaineer* to "treat his readers with a second edition (unimproved)."¹²

In the *Mountaineer* of July 23 Perry pronounced the communication "nothing more nor less than a tissue of misstatements and garbled expressions from beginning to end." Suspecting his old school friend, Dr. Henry H. Townes, of Calhoun's Mills, of having made the attack, he had meanwhile written demanding an explanation.¹³ Infuriated by Perry's editorial rejoinder, Townes acknowledged his identity and announced that he would reply through the *Messenger* in the "temper & manner" demanded.¹⁴ Accordingly, he wrote a

¹¹ July 2, 1831.

¹² July 13, 1831.

¹³ Handbill, "To the Public," published by Perry, November 23, 1831.

¹⁴ H. H. Townes to G. F. Townes, August 4, 1831, Townes Family Papers (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina).

far more satirical article in the *Pendleton Messenger* of August 31. It was entitled "The galled jade has winced," and attempted to prove that Perry had virtually pled guilty to most of the charges against him. He quoted other passages from the *Republican* and the *Mountaineer* to substantiate his claim that Perry had taken a political somersault in the fall of 1828.¹⁵

This last attack was more than the high-tempered young editor of the *Mountaineer* could stand. He turned upon Townes with a "scorching" reply.¹⁶ His editorial in the *Mountaineer* of September 10 was a masterpiece of invective. For the first time he announced that Townes had avowed himself the author of the articles. The last one, he asserted, evinced "as much petty malice, childish anger, and epithetical scurrility, as ever came from a newspaper squib. . . . In all probability the wounded spirit of Nullification, sickening under the miasma of a billious fever region, may have added to its splenetic energies. . . . never did vanity conceive, or insolence dictate, a more beautiful specimen of controversial nonsense." In the closing paragraph he bitterly remarked: "With the writer of 'A Friend' we were long on terms of confidential intimacy, and did not know, until we saw his unprovoked attack on us, that any thing had occurred to break it off."

In the *Pendleton Messenger* of September 21 Townes published a card announcing that Perry had given their correspondence "a character and an aspect which makes him responsible to *another forum*."¹⁷ But he took no further action for a month. Suddenly, on October 13, he appeared in Greenville, accompanied by his friend Major W. A. Bull, and sent a note to Perry demanding that "the offensive editorial coupled with my name in the 'Mountaineer' of the 10th of September, be publicly and peremptorily retracted," and giving him until nine o'clock next morning to reply. Perry answered that if there was anything offensive in the editorial it was caused by Townes's communication, to which it was a reply. "Whilst

¹⁵ *Idem* to *idem*, August 18, 1831, *ibid.*; *Pendleton Messenger*, August 31, 1831.

¹⁶ *Autobiography*, 1849, p. 42; *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 153.

¹⁷ *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 153; *Pendleton Messenger*, September 21, 1831.

the one remains before the public, it is out of the question to ask any withdrawal of the other." Townes immediately sent him a challenge by Major Bull.¹⁸

Shortly before this Perry had suffered a serious accident while driving through Reedy River. His horse had become frightened and overturned the sulky, dashing Perry on the rocks and badly spraining his right wrist and ankle. It was to be months before he could possibly use a pistol.¹⁹ Through his friend Elias Earle, he answered Townes that the satisfaction he demanded would be given as soon as his situation would permit and the necessary arrangements could be made. Townes, through Bull, demanded that the place, weapons, distance, and mode of combat be agreed upon by four o'clock; otherwise his negotiations were ended. Perry then personally directed a note to Major Bull:

Sir—The challenge of Dr. Townes has been accepted, and shall be so considered until withdrawn. The particulars will be made known when my situation will permit and a friend can be procured. There is no disposition on my part to avoid responsibility, or to make any quibbles.

Bull returned the note to Perry, stating that it did not comply with the requisitions. He then handed over the correspondence to Townes with the statement that he did not consider a note declining to give arrangements an acceptance. Townes returned to Abbeville, and nearly a month later posted Perry—publishing the whole correspondence with the following denunciation:

From the foregoing correspondence it will be seen, that after constituting a friend, who consented to act in making the arrangements for an interview, Maj. Perry obstinately declined any negotiation on that subject. This evasion is rendered more palpable and disgraceful by the fact, that after my Card of the 13th September in the Pendleton Messenger, it was publicly known in Greenville that Major Perry was practising with the PISTOL!!! To avoid an appeal to the public, and to leave Maj. Perry no subterfuge for

¹⁸ Handbill, November 23, 1831.

¹⁹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 42; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 153, 208.

his cowardice, I have, notwithstanding the authority of an experienced friend,—waited until the present moment, and having received no intimation that I shall ever hear from him, I embrace the only alternative left me, of pronouncing Maj. BENJAMIN F. PERRY, EDITOR of the GREENVILLE MOUNTAINEER, A VILE SLANDERER AND AN INFAMOUS COWARD!!

H. H. TOWNES.

Calhoun's Mills, Abbeville District, Nov. 13, 1831.²⁰

On November 23 Perry published a handbill, giving the correspondence, together with Townes's denunciation, and filling the last half of the sheet with a scorching rejoinder. He was not surprised, he said, that Dr. Townes had proved himself a friend "false and perfidious," "wanting in manly courage," but he had not thought him "stupid enough to publish to the world his own infamy." He then gave a summary of the controversy from the beginning, inserting insinuations as to Townes's motives. As to the challenge, he wrote accusingly:

After waiting four or five weeks, practising all the time, no doubt, Dr. Townes came here, during Court week, to demand satisfaction. He found me *crippled*, and he *may* have heard of it before he left home. I was unable to walk, and it was with pain that I could even use a pen with my right hand. Would a brave man take advantage of his antagonist in such a situation? Would not a generous man give him time to recover the use of his limbs?

.

When Dr. Townes arrived here, I was arduously engaged in Court. . . . Dr. Townes must have known that this was an improper time for me to make arrangements.—Why then did he select it? Did he expect that our friends would then be present, and by their interference make a *friendly* adjustment of the matter? For what else did *he* come? Is it usual for the principal to go with the second when a challenge is *given*?

He explained his refusal to make the preliminary arrangements. He could not name the *time* in his condition, or the *place* until he procured a friend. If he had named the *weapon*

²⁰ Handbill, November 23, 1831.

and *distance*, it would have enabled Townes to take undue advantage of him by practicing a month or two before he could use a weapon. He did not know the etiquette in such matters, but his friends concurred with him in his course, and public opinion, so far as he knew, sanctioned it. When Major Bull had returned his note accepting the challenge, he had regarded it as a withdrawal of the challenge. Scornfully he continued:

If Dr. Townes had not intended for me so to regard it, he ought to have kept it. How then can he say he waited a month expecting to hear from me? *It is false*. He waited until he found that public opinion regarded him as "backing out." Then, to redeem his character, and throw the responsibility on me, as he thought, of challenging him, he comes out with his hand-bill. But this evasion will not do. Having been challenged, the challenge accepted, and not withdrawn, as Dr. Townes intimates, I shall act on it. The use of my limbs will soon be regained. Hitherto I have not used, nor have I been able to use a weapon of any kind. But in due time the public shall know, in good earnest, who plays the COWARD, as they have already determined who has acted the part of a SCOUNDREL. I must express myself in plain language, when speaking to a *contemptible wretch*, who has lost the *spirit* of a *man*, and the *feelings* of a *gentleman*.

. . . In conclusion I must say, that the hand-bill of Dr. Townes has produced in my bosom no other feelings than those of *pity* and *contempt*.—Yes, there is one other, I regret that I ever considered him as a *friend*, or associated with him as an *honorable man*.

B. F. PERRY.

Greenville C. H. Nov. 23, 1831.

P. S. Inasmuch as I expect to regain the use of my limbs in a short time, Dr. Townes has been informed of the *particulars*.

B. F. P.

Beneath this communication was a brief testimonial signed by Drs. Dennis Marshall and A. B. Crook certifying that Perry's right wrist and ankle had been injured several days previous to the above correspondence; that he had been unable to walk or write; and that his wrist and ankle were yet stiff

and quite weak, so that he was unable to handle a pistol or take his accustomed exercise.

Townes replied in a second handbill, drafted by Armistead Burt, in which he declined to fight from a "becoming regard to the rules which govern honourable men in such matters."²¹ He sent one hundred copies to his brother in Greenville for distribution, writing proudly: "I think you will admit I have taken the last *button* off of the Majors coat, I have left nothing about him that will shine."²²

But as soon as he was able to use a weapon, Perry had his intermediary, Elias Earle, notify Townes of the terms of their meeting. He went on to Augusta at the appointed time, though he had received no reply to the challenge. After waiting in vain a week or ten days, he returned to Greenville and posted Townes again, "with the strongest comments and denunciation."²³

IV

A few months afterwards when Perry heard from James Toney, who was reading law in his office, that William Choice had publicly pronounced his conduct in the Townes affair cowardly, it was more than his overwrought feelings could endure. He immediately addressed a note to Choice asking if it were true. Instead of answering the communication, Choice came to Perry's office and asked: "Perry, what are you writing love notes to me about?"

"I wish to know, Mr. Choice, why you have been talking about me as you have," replied Perry stiffly. "Did you say that I had acted cowardly?"

"I do not remember what I said, but that is what I have always thought," boldly retorted Choice.

"Now, Mr. Choice, you have made the charge against me, and I demand of you the satisfaction usual amongst gentlemen," Perry replied.

²¹ See Samuel A. Townes to G. F. Townes, November 25, 1831, Townes Papers. (The author has not found a copy of this second handbill.)

²² H. H. Townes to G. F. Townes, December 11, 1831, *ibid.*

²³ *Idem* to *idem*, December 25, 1831, *ibid.*; Autobiography, 1849, p. 43; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 128, 154; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 290-296.

"Prove yourself to be a gentleman first," challenged Choice.

Thereupon Perry very deliberately struck him a blow over the shoulders with his walking stick, saying that he would endeavor to give him the proof he required. Choice seized a chair with both hands and struck at his antagonist, but Perry caught the chair with his left hand and broke his walking stick over Choice's head with his right. Hearing the scuffle, William Blassingame, the sheriff, and Jefferson Choice, the younger brother of William, rushed into the office and separated the two men.

That evening Choice came up with a huge cudgel to the bench in front of the Mansion House where Perry was sitting with Judge Earle and others. As he approached, Perry rose from his seat.

"How many pistols have you in your pockets?" asked Choice.

"A couple," replied Perry.

Choice then spoke to Judge Earle, and they went into the Mansion House together.

The next morning, just as Perry opened his office and laid his walking stick down at the door, Choice came in suddenly with a huge hickory club raised in both hands, aiming a blow at Perry's head. Perry sprang at him so quickly that the bludgeon, which was so large that it was unwieldy, fell harmlessly over his shoulders. He then seized his antagonist and crushed him to the floor, expecting him to draw a pistol. Not having time to draw his own, he pulled a dirk from his bosom and struck Choice with it two or three times in the breast. Lewis Luddith, who had seen Choice walking about Perry's office and suspected his motive, now rushed in and disarmed Perry. Choice, not being seriously hurt, got up and walked into the sheriff's office. When he became cool, Perry was truly glad that Luddith had intervened. He regretted the incident, not only because of his previous friendship with Choice, but because of his regard for the Cleveland family. Only a week or two before, Choice had married Perry's former sweetheart,

Caroline Cleveland, who never spoke to him after the unhappy affair. Her husband, however, after a period of time, became friendly again. Years later Perry wrote of the incident: "My feelings had been so much wounded by the Slanders of my political opponents that I had become entirely too sensitive & perhaps permitted my imagination to exaggerate a great many things."²⁴

V

Perry's encounters with Nullifiers were indicative of the perils of newspaper editing in South Carolina at the time. The Unionist editor of the *Columbia Free Press and Hive* engaged in a lively round of fisticuffs with John S. Preston when called to account for an abusive editorial. James H. Hammond, editing a Nullifier paper in Columbia, the *Southern Times*, became involved in a serious difficulty with James Blair, congressman from Camden, over a bad-tempered reply by Blair to Hammond's editorial attacking his stand on the tariff. A challenge was sent and accepted, and a duel prevented only by interference of the Camden Anti-Duelling Association. Later Hammond made a special trip to Camden to horsewhip the editor of the *Camden Journal*, C. F. Daniels, for caustic remarks.²⁵

By the fall of 1831 the tide was distinctly turning for the Nullifiers; the Unionists even began to fear that the legislature itself would nullify the tariff. The Union party of Charleston held a great rally to protest against such an unconstitutional act.²⁶ In the *Mountaineer* of September 10, Perry called upon the people of Greenville to hold an "Anti-Nullification rally" on sales day in October. "If the *Anti-Nullification* party, throughout the State, do not make some exertions, they will have to give up their cause," he warned. "The Nullifiers are all activity, zeal and energy, whilst we remain inert and inactive." Two days later the Union party met in the courthouse

²⁴ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 43-44; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 106, 155-156, 221.

²⁵ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 131-132; Merritt, *James Henry Hammond*, pp. 14-19.

²⁶ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 155-157; supplement to *Charleston Courier*, September 20, 1831.

to make preparations for the rally, and Perry was appointed one of a committee to draft resolutions. In the *Mountaineer* he urged "every one who values this Union and prides himself on being an American citizen" to attend. "A bold and decided stand by the hardy yeomanry of the mountains may and will have its influence," he declared. On the appointed day over five hundred Union men were present at the rally. Perry forcefully stated their object: "We have assembled to declare our detestation of the Tariff, our opposition to the doctrine of Nullification, our love for the Union, and our confidence in the honor and patriotism of the President of the United States." With clear and logical reasoning he then attacked the Carolina doctrine. The meeting enthusiastically endorsed the resolutions reported by the committee: they were willing to do anything to get rid of the tariff by constitutional means, but condemned nullification as revolution and warned the legislature against it.²⁷

Perry journeyed to Columbia to watch over the proceedings of the legislature. Since the Nullifiers, as well as the Unionists, were hoping for relief from Congress, they proposed no revolutionary action.²⁸ The Union members, having learned the value of organization from the Nullifiers, held a caucus and published an Address to the People of South Carolina, giving publicity to their views. Though denouncing the tariff, they warned of the disasters that would follow nullification, and pled: "Pause then, fellow citizens, before you cross the Rubicon. Count the cost before you peril your all. The benefits of Union are certain, you have prospered in it more than any other people. . . . Remember no other State is disposed to nullify."²⁹

Perry wrote from Columbia: "I feel proud to see the Union party headed by Judge Smith and Governor Manning in the Senate, and by Judge Huger, Poinsett and Petigru in the

²⁷ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 10, 17, 24, October 8, November 12, 1831.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, December 3, 1831; Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 158-159.

²⁹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, January 7, 1832.

House. Governed by such men, the Republic can never be in danger."³⁰

During the first six months of 1832 both Unionists and Nullifiers anxiously awaited a modification of the tariff by Congress, but remedial action seemed hopeless under the bills introduced by Clay and McLane. The Nullifiers became bolder and bolder in their defiance, threatening resistance to tyranny even if bloodshed and civil war ensued.³¹ Perry agreed with the Nullifiers in condemning the proposed bills, and became greatly alarmed in March and April when Clay's bill seemed likely to pass. But he differed with them drastically in the remedy proposed. "It will be for the Southern country to give the response," he insisted. "But for South Carolina to act alone, is the height or [of] folly. The other States are equally interested with her, and must act in concert, or there can be no effectual resistance." When passage of the bill seemed even more imminent, he put the question squarely before his readers:

There is danger at hand, and we should be prepared to meet it. . . . The only alternatives left us will be, *submission* to it, or *revolution*. . . . Let no one suppose that the State can act *effectually* and *peacefully*. If we *resist*, it must be at the *point of the bayonet*, and not with the *verdict of a Jury*. . . . For the State to act alone is the height of folly and *quixotism*. If we are right in preferring *disunion* to the *Tariff*, other States will act with us. But if we are wrong, we shall be left alone.

As for himself, he considered submission even to an "oppressive and unconstitutional law" preferable to disunion.³²

Meanwhile the situation was brightening in Washington. The Adams Bill had been reported, and was finally adopted on July 14. The Unionists in South Carolina accepted it as a step in the right direction, but the Nullifiers condemned it vociferously as worse than the tariff of 1828, claiming that it established protection as the settled policy of the country.³³

³⁰ *Ibid.*, December 10, 1831.

³¹ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 164-168, 173-175.

³² *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 28, February 4, March 17, 31, April 7, 1832.

³³ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 168-172; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 118-119.

Perry felt that the tariff bill as passed was the best that the Southern members could obtain, and hailed the reductions as a great improvement. He gave itemized comparisons of the duties on various articles, showing that in all \$5,187,078 had been removed—\$1,869,056 of which was on *protected articles*. "The Union papers of this State are willing to put up with the present Bill until next session of Congress," he declared.³⁴

But there was no such spirit of forbearance among the Nullifiers. It was election year, and they were determined to secure a legislature with a two-thirds majority in favor of calling a convention. Since spring they had held meetings, flooded the country with pamphlets, and carried on an intensive press campaign. "It seems they speak of nothing else, write of nothing else, nor think of nothing but Nullification," remarked Perry. He threw himself vigorously into the campaign to thwart their purpose if possible; at least he could hold Greenville District to the Unionist cause. "The yeomanry of this district are made of sterner stuff, than that which yields to every political breeze that wafts across the country," he boasted. As early as April he had called upon the legislative candidates for a statement of their creed. When the Unionist incumbents reannounced their opposition to nullification and their endorsement of Jackson, he applauded.³⁵

Of the three opposition candidates in Greenville—Robert Maxwell, Tandy Walker, and William Choice—he wrote:

The gentlemen composing the State Rights ticket are unexceptionable as *men*; but altogether objectionable as *politicians*. It would, under different circumstances, afford us as much pleasure to support some of them, as it does now to oppose them. We regret exceedingly those differences in politics which have separated us from some of our warmest and best friends. But this separation is a mere feather in the balance, when compared with the honor and glory of our country. Friendship has no name, kindred has no ties, when placed in opposition to the *Liberty, Independence, and Union* of the Republic.³⁶

³⁴ Greenville Mountaineer, July 28, August 4, 25, September 1, 1832.

³⁵ Ibid., June 2, April 21, May 5, 1832.

³⁶ Ibid., May 12, 1832.

VI

The Nullifiers could not hope to win in Greenville District if Perry were left unmolested. Waddy Thompson and other leaders determined to establish a nullification newspaper to counteract the influence of the *Mountaineer*, which could now boast a subscription list of over three hundred. Though Wells's income from the paper was meager—its subscription price being only \$3.00—he had the backing of well-to-do Unionists from other districts. An agency for the *Mountaineer* had even been established in Charleston, despite the three Unionist journals there.³⁷

The friends of Calhoun became alarmed, and were no doubt largely instrumental in persuading Turner Bynum, a brilliant young man from Columbia who often visited friends in Pendleton, to go to Greenville and become editor of the *Southern Sentinel*. Bynum, though only twenty-five, had already made a name for himself in journalism, having left South Carolina College his junior year to engage in newspaper work. He was contemplating establishing a nullification journal in Montgomery, Alabama, at the time.³⁸ Perry thus speaks of him in his Autobiography:

He was a young man of talents, wrote well, high spirited & of unquestioned courage. He was the very man, my enemies, personal & political, wanted to break down the *Mountaineer* & destroy me, either in character or life! I was aware of their object & determined to act prudently whilst I acted firmly. I called to see Mr. Bynum at the Mansion House & told him it would give me great pleasure to be of any service to him in fixing up his printing office, etc.³⁹

The first issue of the newspaper appeared on June 23. Symmes of the Pendleton *Messenger* welcomed so able an ally: "The address of the Editor, and several other articles in

³⁷ Autobiography, 1874, p. 157; Autobiography, 1849, p. 44; Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 14, 28, 1831, May 12, 1832.

³⁸ Simpson, *History of Old Pendleton District*, p. 35; letter by "A Kinswoman" of Bynum in *Columbia State*, April 2, 1906; Tandy Walker to G. F. Townes, February 23, 1833, Townes Papers; Greenville *Mountaineer*, March 10, 1832.

³⁹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 157-158.

the paper, discover great zeal and talent in defence of Southern rights."⁴⁰ Perry gave the journal a kindly editorial notice and spoke circumspectly of the influence of the *Mountaineer*:

The first number of the "Southern Sentinel" edited by Turner Bynum, Esq. and published by B. Bynum and G. E. W. Nelson, was issued in this place on Saturday last. This paper will be devoted mainly, to the great question which now agitates South Carolina. The Editor is a young man of talents and literary attainments, and will, no doubt, conduct the Sentinel with great zeal and ability. He says in his address, that his course shall be governed by fair, open and manly argument, without descending to the slang, abuse and personalities of a newspaper bully. To such an Editor, conducting his paper on such principles, we shall always be happy to extend the right hand of friendship and good feeling. Although we differ on abstract principles, it is no cause for a want of that civility, courtesy and kindness which mark the conduct of friends and honorable men. The question now for the consideration of the people of South Carolina is a great and important one, and both sides should be fairly, honestly and patiently heard. Let this be done, and then let the people decide for themselves. Free and rational discussion we have ever been in favor of. The people, if properly informed on any and every subject, will do what is right. There can be no doubt of this. It is their interest to act correctly in all public affairs. In this district, the people have had frequent opportunities of hearing both sides. Many of the most prominent & talented of our citizens have often discussed the subject before numerous assemblies. Papers, advocating the principles of the State Rights party, have been taken from a distance. Tracts, and pamphlets, emanating from the Free Trade Association, have been distributed among them, we believe, monthly. With all these sources of information, the people have had pretty good opportunities of hearing both sides. There are in this district sixteen hundred voters and of this number, a very small portion indeed have ever taken the *Mountaineer*. We do not think that the influence of this paper has been such as some persons have attributed to it. On the contrary, we believe that it has done very little towards the formation of the present sentiments of the district.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Pendleton *Messenger*, June 27, 1832.

⁴¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, June 30, 1832.

Beyond doubt, however, Perry was a powerful factor in holding Greenville to the Unionist cause. Witness the volunteer toasts at a Fourth of July celebration in the upper part of the district:

Maj. B. F. Perry, Editor of the Mountaineer—A gallant defender of the Liberties of the people; like precious metal, improved by a fiery trial.

Maj. B. F. Perry. May he long continue, as he hitherto has done, to oppose and expose the tide of political delusion that threatens to inundate our beloved country. And may he always rise victorious over the machinations of his enemies, whether they attack him with guns, clubs, or butcher-knives.⁴²

Subscriptions to the *Mountaineer* mounted steadily during the first month the rival *Sentinel* was published. On July 14 Perry announced seventy or eighty new subscribers; on July 28, fifteen or twenty; and on December 8, forty. Of the 350 or 400 subscribers, 60 lived in the village of Greenville, about 150 in the district, and 200 in other districts.⁴³

Party hostility was so keen that the Committee of Arrangements for the Fourth of July celebration in Greenville dispensed with the usual public dinner. "The tone of popular feeling is too high, and too openly expressed, to permit your Committee to congregate the people at a public dinner," they announced.⁴⁴ Perry lamented the situation in his Journal:

The present state of parties in South Carolina is truly deplorable. The warmest and most intimate friends have become estranged in their feelings towards each other. In many [instances] they hate and despise each other. They avoid one another in company and have suspended all social intercourse. If the most bitter enemies happen to agree in politics they become friends and forget all old grudges and causes of animosity. I know many persons in this village who were never friendly until the present political divisions made them so. They are now as intimate as brothers. I could mention names but it is unnecessary. In many cases Father and

⁴² *Ibid.*, July 14, 1832.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, July 14, 21, 28, 1832.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, June 30, 1832.

Son differ, and so do brothers. . . . What will be the consequences no one can judge or predict. In all probability a revolution and civil war will ensue. There are many discontented spirits in South Carolina.⁴⁵

His position as editor was becoming more and more unpleasant, but he saw no immediate escape:

The life of an Editor is one continued altercation. It is fit for none but blackguards at the present crisis. He who has the least feeling and the most scurrility will come off best. It has been my most anxious wish to abandon the *Mountaineer*, but circumstances have forced me to continue its Editor. As soon as party spirit subsides I will lay aside newspapers, and devote myself to literature and my profession. If I were to do so sooner my enemies would attribute it to a want of nerve.⁴⁶

In the *Mountaineer* Perry carefully avoided any further mention of Bynum or his newspaper. But suddenly in the *Southern Sentinel* of August 4 appeared an editorial which abruptly terminated their amicable relations. Entitled "The Late Tariff Act," it called the tariff "compromise" of Adams a "cheat," and denounced the Unionist press as submissionists. Then came a specific attack on Perry:

The "*Mountaineer*" of the last week, with a truckling subserviency to the traitorous dictates of the leading submission presses of the State, has asserted that the tariff has been "favorably adjusted"; that there is a reduction of \$10,000,000; and that the duties, under the late Act, are "infinitely lower," than by the bill of 1816. Such reckless assertions would hardly deserve the notice of a sensible man, were it not that it is necessary to disabuse the public mind, so far as it is influenced by that paper, of wanton and egregious error. . . . Upon what foundation does this broad assertion rest? Oh! It is the SUPPOSITION (!!!) of a "respectable gentleman!" Now this is a mode of summing up too latitudinarian for common folks, who have been taught to believe there was some certainty, at least, in the figures of arithmetic. The property, the liberty, the lives of the people are not to be fooled away upon the *supposition* of a gentleman however respectable.

⁴⁵ I, 25-26.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 8.

Bynum proceeded to give McDuffie's estimate of the reduction as only \$4,600,000, and listed revenue and expenditures for the following year to prove that there would be a surplus of \$11,000,000 in the Treasury. He then warned his readers against the treachery of such "submission" leaders as Perry:

But, says the "Mountaineer," the next Congress, when they find that there is such an amount of money, lying idle in the Treasury, will be obliged to reduce the revenue—the people will not submit to such enormous exactions! And pray, Sir Knight of the Mountain, when did this extraordinary light burst upon you? What necessity has there been, in years past, for the gross robbery which the people of the South have suffered? Why have they submitted to the appropriations for Roads and Canals, all other Internal Improvements, and the wanton bestowal of money to Court favourites, in the shape of out-fits and salaries? Why do they now submit to a fraudulent Pension Bill; to an unprecedented lavishing of the public money upon the *clearing of frog-ponds*, the *digging of mud-puddles*, called canals, and to the late and present Tariff acts? I'll tell you why they do submit—and I call the people every where to hear the truth, and mark it well—It is because you Sir Knight, and such as you, have been lulling them to sleep with a bolus of submission, both now and ever since the origin of the present contest between South Carolina and the Tariff monopolists. It is to you, and such as you throughout the State, who have assumed to yourselves the awkward (and God grant it may not prove the fearful) responsibility of Defenders, and, indirectly at least, advocates of the System of Protection! Submit! Yes—they *will* submit to any thing that the usurping Majority may choose to inflict, if they are left to such teachers as you, who cry, "Peace, peace—all's well!"—while the robber is plundering them before their eyes. . . . Let the people be upon the guard—you have to contend against fearful odds—and the more fearful, because the enemy comes with a lure, and not a threat—with a pretended alleviation of your evils, under the false name of "compromise," when it is, in reality, a tenfold greater oppression. And what is worse you have within your camp, wearing your uniform, giving your own countersign, State Rights, and crying your own watchword, Union, the liege vassals of your sworn enemy. Be vigilant! "Be instant in season and out of season!" Let not the lulling voice of a treacherous Dalilah close your watch-

ful eyes! Be not deceived by the delusion of "compromise"—the lips of the ravisher are full of seductive sweetness. The serpent wooed Eve to commit sin by a tempting lie—and the monopolists with their confederates and apologists here, would lead you to inevitable slavery, by offering to bind upon your arms, what they deceitfully call, bracelets of gold—but which, if you needlessly accept, will be found shackles of iron!

In his Autobiography, Perry thus describes his reaction to the article:

I was greatly shocked when I saw his Editorial for it came upon me like a clap of thunder in a clear sky. It was so unprovoked so uncalled for, that I thought it was written expressly to bring about a difficulty. Immediately after reading the article, & without seeing a human being, or hearing a word said in reference to the article, I sat down & wrote a note to him saying I was not disposed to bandy epithets with him & that his Editorial required me to demand of him the satisfaction usual amongst gentlemen. I then called my boy & sent him for Doctor Crook. He came in a few minutes & I told him what I wanted. He took the Challenge to Bynum who promptly accepted it & the terms of our meeting were agreed on.⁴⁷

The next day Perry wrote in his Journal:

I have once more got into a difficulty. On yesterday morning "The Sentinel" made a most scurrilous and abusive attack on me. I challenged Mr. Bynum the Editor immediately. He accepted the challenge—to fight as soon as he could procure his weapons and send for an acting friend. This is what Bynum and the Sentinel were brought here for. Waddy Thompson, a false hearted demagogue and a jesuitical slanderer, whose patriotism consists in egotistical declamation, and whose chivalry has been wasted in words, has made a tool of Bynum to destroy me. I am in his way and in the way of other nullifiers in this place. Their maxim is *Carthago Delenda est*. But if there is justice in a ruling Providence I will come out safe. I commit myself to Almighty God for protection and security against the machinations of mine enemies. They are reckless of all principles of honour and patriotism. They have

⁴⁷ Autobiography, 1874, p. 158.

made several attempts to blast my reputation and take my life. But God has preserved me. In him I yet have faith. My life is not of much consequence to me. But the grief and distress it will cause my Parents should any misfortune befall me.⁴⁸

The encounter, which Perry had felt was inevitable ever since Bynum had come to Greenville, was now upon him. Dr. Crook went to Pendleton to interview Bynum's second and fix the day and place of meeting. It was agreed that the duel would be fought August 16 on an island in the Tugaloo River near Hatton's Ford—a spot about fifteen miles south of Perry's birthplace in old Pendleton District.⁴⁹ Two days before he left for the encounter, Perry wrote an address to the people of Greenville which was to be a farewell if he was killed. In the turbulence of his emotions, one desire seemed uppermost—vindication of his principles before the people that he loved.

August 11, 1832.

On Monday morning I set out for the purpose of meeting Bynum near Hattenford Georgia. Before I do so I have thought proper to leave behind an address to the people of Greenville District. I wish to give them a word of advice. If I never return it must be published. If the affair is settled amicably it will never be seen. I feel it my duty to thus part with the people of this District. I hope they will listen to what I say and heed it.

"TO THE PEOPLE OF GREENVILLE"

"FELLOW CITIZENS—You have known me long—I have lived with you for years past—You took me by the hand in the hour of want and obscurity. Your patronage has been liberal and your friendship sincere. Whatever I am, or whatever good I may have done to you I am indebted for it all. For several years past I have been before you as in some measure a public servant, the editor of a newspaper. I have had a boisterous sea to sail upon. Devoted as I am to the Republic and the Union I could not have acted differently from what I have without a sacrifice of all principle and honesty. This I have disdained to do. There are many among you who have done it. Because I have had firmness enough to resist

⁴⁸ I, August 5, 1832.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, August 23, 1832; Autobiography, 1849, p. 45; Mills, *Atlas of the State of South Carolina*, "Pendleton District."

the revolutionary movements of a traitorous party within the State, I have been denounced, persecuted, and hunted up by every slanderous coward in the whole community. I have been a thorn in the side of the Nullification party in this district. They have tried every means to get rid of me. Hitherto they have failed. Slander, assassination etc. have proved abortive. The attempt now is to take me off by a tool and hireling brought here for that purpose. Should I be killed by the Editor of the Sentinel they will rejoice much in their hearts. Their object will have been accomplished. Never was any poor fellow so much persecuted as I have been. My object has been peace and politeness towards [them]. . . . They have returned by vile slanders. I appeal to the file of the Mountaineer for the truth of the assertion. In that no one will find any personal abuse or slang. But the conduct of the nullifiers towards me is in character with their whole course through the present controversy. They wished to tyrannise over and break down every thing which opposes them. Their hatred and violence, their rancour and vindictiveness are beyond human conception. Too cowardly to meet me themselves in the field of honor they have procured Turner Bynum a desperate adventurer without home or reputation, a Swiss who will fight for any one. Waddy Thompson a false hearted demagogue, a man whose patriotism consists in noisy declamation, and whose chivalry has hitherto been wasted in words, is behind the curtain, principle actor in the Tragedy. He has sought my blood with a cowards spirit and a traitors smile. He brought Bynum to this place he assists him in editing the Sentinel, he advises and consults with him, he pulls the wires."⁵⁰

On August 13 Perry left Greenville, accompanied by Dr. Crook and Perry Duncan as seconds, Dr. Marshall as surgeon, and Benajah Dunham and Dr. Randell Croft as friends. After spending the night in Pendleton, they proceeded to the Tugalo, stopping at a boarding house about a mile from Hatton's Ford. Bynum arrived on the fifteenth, accompanied by James H. Hammond and Colonel Haskell as seconds, Dr. Reese as

⁵⁰ Journal, I, August 11, 1832. It is evident that Perry's accusations against Thompson and Bynum in his Journal are overdrawn, because of his excitement and hypersensitiveness. In later years he spoke admiringly of Bynum and rated Thompson among his best friends, though still crediting the latter with having had a large part in starting the *Southern Sentinel* (Autobiography, 1874, pp. 153, 157-158).

surgeon, and Colonel Thomas Pinckney, Mr. Harleston, and Colonel Taylor as friends.⁵¹

On Thursday morning, August 16, the friends of Perry and Bynum met by sunrise on the island in the Tugaloo and measured the ground. It was an ideal place for the combat. The heavily forested island, comprising about sixty acres, stretched down the center of the river, directly opposite the South Carolina side of Hatton's Ford, concealing from view the Georgia side. The Tugaloo at this point is exceedingly broad and shallow, allowing the passage of horses and vehicles across its shoals to the island and thence to the other side; generally, it may even be waded across. The road leading to the ford terminates at the water's edge in a beautiful grove of wide-spaced oaks. It was a remote and peaceful spot.⁵²

Perry thus describes the duel in his Journal:

I left Browns at eight oclock or before, drove slowly to the Island—remained there about a half an hour—a few minutes before the time of combat I got up and gently exercised in walking to and fro. My mind was constantly kept on the object in view. I thought of nothing else. I was cool, firm and collected, never more so in my life. We were ordered to take our places, we both approached the parts with firmness and promptness. We steadied ourselves and looked to see if we were in the proper direction. I thought Bynum looked unusually pale. I do not know how I *looked*, but I felt remarkably well not the least affrighted or intimidated. I felt no sort of excitement. Our pistols were handed [us], we both held them *up* perpendicular. The word was asked by Col. Hammond "Are you ready." I had my pistol ranging in a direct line with his body, the lock about as high as his waist. The word "fire" was pronounced. I then lowered my pistol gradually. Bynum fired at the

⁵¹ Journal, I, August 23, 1832; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 158-159; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 104-108.

⁵² Journal, I, August 23, 1832; visit of author to scene, August 28, 1941; conversation with residents of vicinity. Hatton's Ford is reached today by turning from the graveled highway between Anderson and Fairway and following a dirt road that winds for two or three miles through secluded bottom lands to the ford. At present Mr. Will Elrod owns the island and raises grain on it. Old residents tell of having often ridden in bateaux to picnics on the island, crossing the river south of the ford. There was also a toll bridge into Georgia several miles below the ford. (Information from Mr. J. L. Sheldon and Mrs. Fannie Sheldon Kibler.)

word "one"—his ball passed through the lapels of my coat, cut the frill of my shirt, and the corner of my waistcoat—passed about an inch and a half from my skin. I was in the act of taking sight when Bynum fired—his shot confused me a little for the moment, but I soon recovered. I regained my sight and fired at the word "two"—my ball passed through his body just above the hips and broke two of his fingers as it came out—his hand was resting on his left hip. He reeled to the right, dropped his pistol and was caught by his friends. My surgeon ran up and thought that Turner hit [me], told me to sit down on my cloak. I did so looked and saw I was not touched. I then inquired where Bynum was hit and was told in the thigh—I thought this a mistake. I then went to my carriage and sent to know if I might be allowed to speak with Bynum after hearing that he was in all probability mortally wounded. Permission was given and I went up, addressed him "Good morning Mr. Bynum"—he returned the salutation. I then observed "I hope to God you may recover"—He thanked me and said "I think I shall"—"I do not believe the wound fatal." I was much affected and turned off. He was lying on his side stripped naked, the wound exposed to my view. I sent him word by Mr. Duncan that I had buried all bad feelings with the fire of my pistol. He said in reply that he had none against me. I left the Island for my Fathers fifteen miles above on the river. I reached there half after twelve found the family in great distress. They had heard it was to be some time shortly. My mother met me at the gate and I told the issue. She burst into a flood of tears.⁵³

Perry heard nothing more about Bynum until he went to Samuel Earle's to spend Saturday night. Judge Earle was at his father's and reported that he had heard that Bynum was better the preceding evening. On Sunday morning, however, word came that Bynum had died on Friday evening, and had been buried on Saturday night in the graveyard of the Old Stone Church near Pendleton—a historic spot where rested the remains of General Andrew Pickens and other heroes of old Pendleton. It had been a dismal funeral, conducted at midnight after a very heavy rain. The streams were swollen, and

⁵³ I, August 23, 1832.

Bynum's friends had had much difficulty in reaching the grave, which was half filled with water.⁵⁴

Upon hearing the tragic news, Perry returned to his father's. Next morning he rode back to Greenville, feeling very disconsolate when he passed Bynum's grave on the way. He received a warm welcome from the people of Greenville, who had been greatly relieved when they heard the outcome.⁵⁵ The affair seems to have been kept as quiet as possible. There was no mention of it in the *Mountaineer*. The *Pendleton Messenger*, carrying a notice of Bynum's death, carefully avoided any display of partisan spirit:

We have the melancholy duty to perform, of recording the death of T. Bynum, Esq. Editor of the Greenville Southern Sentinel. He died on Friday evening last, near Hatton's Ford in this district, of a wound received on Thursday morning previous in a duel. He was a young man of talent, and worth, and was regarded by those who knew him as one of great promise. He has left some near relatives, and many friends to lament his untimely end, and to deplore the prevalence of a custom which so often deprives society of its brightest ornaments.⁵⁶

Perry met Bynum's brother soon after his return to Greenville. They shook hands and had a long talk. The brother assured Perry that he bore no ill will. There were men in Greenville, he said, who had made a tool of his brother and induced him to believe that Perry would not fight. When he remarked that he would like to leave Greenville but had no funds, Perry gave him thirty dollars, though he could ill afford it, since he was receiving a salary of only a few hundred dollars for editing the *Mountaineer* and an income of only \$500 or \$600 from his law practice during the depressing years of

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*; Autobiography, 1874, p. 159; Simpson, *History of Old Pendleton District*, pp. 35-36. It is stated by old residents of Pendleton and by Simpson that two pine poles, cut to place across the grave for the casket to rest upon, were stuck into the ground, one at the head and the other at the foot of the grave, and that they grew into large pine trees (*ibid.*). James Henry Rice, writing in 1925, gives the same story and states that the trees marked the spot until about 1905, when a vandal cut them down (*Columbia State*, June 21, 1925).

⁵⁵ Journal, I, August 23, 1832.

⁵⁶ August 22, 1832.

the nullification period.⁵⁷ Of his donation Perry writes: "This was almost half the money I had in the world, and owed that, and not much prospect of getting more. I gave it with a cheerful heart. He accepted it with feelings of gratitude and modesty. May God restore the injury I have caused him."

Perry was tremendously affected by the tragic occurrence. In his Journal he recorded on August 23:

I now return thanks to almighty God for his mercy and protection. There *is* justice in a ruling Providence. I did not appeal to the throne of Grace in vain. My prayers were heard, and the prayers of the community were heard. Oh God let this act of my life horrible and fatal as it has been be converted to my temporal and spiritual benefit. Let it be the means of infusing into my bosom a true sense and feeling of religion.⁵⁸

Over forty years after the duel he wrote in his Autobiography:

This has been to me the most painful event of my life. But I could not avoid it without sacrificing character & usefulness in life. Public opinion which sanctions duelling is to blame, and it must continue until there is a change in the opinion of the public. I had no ill will against Bynum & he said he had none against me! Yet we met in fatal combat, & no one attempted to interfere to stop it! I knew full well that sooner or later, I should have to fight for my principles or be disgraced.

This put an end to all the secret slanders & afterwards the nullifiers treated me with the greatest courtesy. Good results from evil very often. When a man knows that he is to be held accountable for his want of courtesy, he is not so apt to indulge in abuse. In this way duelling produces a greater courtesy in society & a higher refinement.⁵⁹

After the death of Turner Bynum and the departure from Greenville of his brother (evidently B. Bynum, one of the publishers), G. E. W. Nelson continued publishing the *Southern*

⁵⁷ Journal, I, August 23, 1832; Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 28, 1831; Autobiography, 1849, p. 34.

⁵⁸ I, August 23, 1832.

⁵⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 160.

Sentinel until the middle of December, when he announced that it would be discontinued.⁶⁰ Perry states in his Autobiography that Waddy Thompson and Tandy Walker acted as editors during the period after Bynum's death;⁶¹ in the Townes correspondence it is mentioned that "Walker would manage the 'Sentinel.'"⁶² The Nullifiers probably decided to give up the project as futile after the Unionists polled a victory of almost three to one in the fall elections in Greenville.⁶³ But despite party animosity during the critical campaign the relationship between the *Mountaineer* and *Southern Sentinel* seems to have been marked by mutual politeness and courtesy.⁶⁴ At bitter cost Perry had won a respite from personal attacks by the Nullifiers.

⁶⁰ Greenville *Mountaineer*, June 30, December 15, 1832.

⁶¹ Autobiography, 1849, p. 45.

⁶² H. H. Townes to G. F. Townes, September 6, 1832, Townes Papers. G. Frank Townes was a good friend of Bynum, attended him at the duel, and was deeply grieved over his death. Henry and Samuel thought well of Bynum, and along with other prominent Nullifiers of Abbeville, had held high hopes of his changing the politics of Greenville through his ability as editor (*idem* to *idem*, June 28, August 30, 1832; S. A. Townes to *idem*, June 7, August 23, 1832, *ibid.*).

⁶³ Greenville *Mountaineer*, October 13, 1832. The returns were as follows: Senate—Banister Stone, 1311; Butler, 334. House—Cobb, 1293; Harrison, 1280; Berry, 1279; Walker, 500; Maxwell, 471; Choice, 427.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, September 22, 29, 1832.

CHAPTER NINE

The Nullification Battle

AROUSÉD BY THE success of the Nullifiers in spreading their doctrine during the summer of 1832, the Unionists called a state party convention to meet in Columbia on September 10 to consider the expediency of calling a Southern convention. Meetings endorsing the plan were held in Charleston, Sumter, Union, York, Spartanburg, and other places. The Unionists hoped to prevent the people from electing a legislature in October that would carry nullification into effect.¹ "Let us make a goodly show and put forth a strong Address," wrote Petigru, "the object of which will be either acquiescence or Convention."²

The Union party of Greenville had called a meeting for the same day, but selected delegates from other districts to represent them in Columbia.³ Their own convention in September was a great success; over one thousand attended, though the weather was bad. Letters were read from distinguished Union men in the state—William Drayton, O'Neill, Judge Smith, and Henry Middleton. Perry drew up the preamble and resolutions for the meeting, and "very ably and eloquently" advocated them in a speech which was received with much applause. He regarded it as perhaps his best effort during the nullification excitement.⁴

¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, June 23, September 1, 8, 1832; J. S. Richardson to Perry, May 7, 1832, Perry Papers.

² Petigru to Elliott, August 7, 1832, Allston-Pringle-Hill Collection (Typescript, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina).

³ Greenville *Mountaineer*, August 18, September 1, 1832; Mitchell King to Charles W. D'Oyley, August 27, 1832, Perry Papers; Langdon Cheves to Perry, September 4, 1832, *ibid.*

⁴ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 15, 1832; Autobiography, 1849, p. 39; Journal, I, September 12, 1832.

Lamenting the "party violence and personal rancor" which had "swept over the fair bosom of Carolina," he magnanimously said:

I would not, however, be understood as imputing to the opposing party, all the blame and odium which so justly belong to the present excitement. I will not do them such injustice. It would be wronging their high and manly feeling. I know that they have too often been taunted, provoked and insulted by the acting and proceedings of the Union party. . . . For myself, I will say that there are men in the ranks of the State Rights party, whose courtesy and politeness, whose virtue and talents, whose patriotism and honorable feelings cannot be surpassed. Many of the leaders of that party have long been Carolina's brightest and most distinguished ornaments. . . .

It was not necessary to expose the doctrine of nullification to such an enlightened audience, he continued, or to discuss the impolicy or unconstitutionality of the tariff. On the latter subject, Nullifiers and Union men differed only as to the mode and measure of redress. The Union party did not wish to "jeopardize the safety and well being of the Republic" to break down the protective system; they believed that by unity of action and concert among the Southern states, the tariff would finally "crumple into atoms." He then took up the late modification of the tariff by Congress, attempting to prove that it was "the entering wedge" by which the tariff would be rent asunder. He gave figures to show that the tariff had been reduced nearly one third since 1830, and that nearly one third of the reduction was on *protected* articles—not all on *unprotected*, as the Nullifiers claimed. Had they not obtained some relief from Congress? "The protective system was built up gradually, and must come down in the same way. If it were abandoned at once, it would work great injustice to the manufacturers. . . . Mr. Calhoun acknowledges this himself in his Expose published last summer."

The South should not relax, however, in exertions against the protective policy. The Union party of the state, then meet-

ing in Columbia, would in all probability recommend a Southern convention, which he, like Judge Cheves, thought the "only remedy which deserves the name." As for the state convention advocated by the State Rights party, its only purpose was nullification. "It should be the object of those who are opposed to Nullification, to oppose also a State Convention. If they yield the one, they will be compelled to yield the other."

Throughout the speech ran a note of hopefulness and tolerance, of deep regret for the bitterness engendered by nullification in the past and longing for reconciliation. He ended with an earnest plea:

One word more, Mr. Chairman, and I have done. It is only to repeat what I have often said before. We should not indulge in abuse and recrimination. It is unbecoming honorable men. We differ in politics with many of our fellow-citizens, who are as honorable and as conscientious as we are. Let them enjoy their opinions. All we should ask from them is the same privilege. . . . Let us make friends and not enemies of our political opponents. The spirit of intolerance should not be among us—our motto should be "devotion to our country, and good will to mankind."⁵

The Greenville meeting enthusiastically adopted the resolutions advocated by Perry—the chief of which were condemnation of nullification and endorsement of a Southern convention. Perry, much gratified, wrote in his Journal:

My rising popularity with the people of Greenville is a source of great consolation to me. I have latterly [been] pressed very much to offer for Congress. The people would have nominated me on Monday if I had consented or desired it. . . . Whilst the nullifiers are abusing me the Union men are paying me unwonted praise. These ought to be some balm to my feelings. The situation in which I have been placed for the last two or three [years] has been very unpleasant.⁶

In vain did the Nullifiers of Greenville try to offset the Union rally by a big barbecue dinner on September 19, at

⁵ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 15, 1832.

⁶ I, September 12, 1832.

which Governor Hamilton, McDuffie, Warren Davis, and Chancellor Harper made eloquent addresses. The Union men could not be deterred. Perry carried on an unremitting campaign; he warned the voters that nullification and convention were synonymous—convention meant nullification, and nullification meant revolution and civil war.⁷

In the last days of the campaign, Perry strongly refuted the charge of the Nullifiers that the prosperity of the North and the economic decay of the South were a result of the tariff. He wrote:

We ask if there are not other causes for this unfavorable comparison? The Northern people are an industrious, frugal and economical people. The citizens of the South are, on the contrary, idle, extravagant and uncalculating in the management of their business. The diminution in the value of lands in South Carolina is attributed to the Tariff. May not this be more properly attributed to the immense quantity of lands brought into market in the Western country? This too has drained South Carolina of her citizens, and is mainly the cause of the reduction in the price of Cotton. Instead of being cultivated in Georgia and South Carolina exclusively, Cotton is now planted more extensively in Alabama, Mississippi and Florida.⁸

When election day arrived in October, the Union party won an overwhelming victory in Greenville; the district proved a greater stronghold of unionism than ever. In the 1830 election the majority in favor of the Union ticket had been only two or three hundred, but now it was about eight hundred. Greenville proved "as true as steel," said Perry.⁹

But nullification had swept the state; it was immediately evident that more than two thirds of the new legislature were advocates of the doctrine. The Union party was defeated everywhere except in Greenville, Spartanburg, Chesterfield, Lancaster, Kershaw, Clarendon, and Georgetown districts, and in two or three parishes. Pendleton would normally have

⁷ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 8, 22, 29, 1832.

⁸ *Ibid.*, September 22, 1832.

⁹ *Ibid.*, October 13, 1832; Autobiography, 1849, p. 39.

been Unionist; and Perry commended the Union party there for polling as large a vote as it did, with the influence of the Vice-President, the governor, and other distinguished advocates of the Carolina doctrine against it. The legislature, convened in special session by Governor Hamilton on October 22, quickly passed the call for a state convention to meet on the third Monday in November.¹⁰

The Union members of the legislature held a caucus and determined to send delegates from the districts where their party had the ascendancy. The Unionists of Charleston publicly announced that they would not offer candidates for the convention, as they would not directly or indirectly sanction an act of nullification. They appointed a Committee of Correspondence to communicate with leaders of the Union party in other districts, suggesting that even if they ran delegates where their party was stronger, it would be best for the delegates to refuse to take their seats, since they would most likely be consigned "to an odious fame" like the Hartford Convention. Perry agreed with the Greenville legislative delegation, however, that the Unionists should take their seats and attempt to prevent radical action. "It is to be hoped that the Union Party throughout the State will make another bold and manly effort to save the Constitution, the Union and regulated liberty," he urged.¹¹

The Union party of Greenville met on November 5 and nominated Perry, Silas R. Whitten, Thomas P. Brockman, and Henry Middleton, of Charleston, for the convention. Middleton was chosen through the influence of Perry, who thought it wise to include distinguished Union men from districts where their party was in the minority. Spartanburg, by this plan, nominated O'Neill, John S. Richardson, and Alfred Huger from other districts. On election day the Union party won in Greenville with its usual heavy majority. Perry led the ticket with 1055 votes, while Judge Earle, the highest can-

¹⁰ *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 20, 27, 1832; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 125-126.

¹¹ *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 27, November 3, 1832; printed circular addressed to B. F. Perry and C. W. D'Oyley, Perry Papers.

didate of the Nullifiers, received only 381.¹² Perry was deeply pleased by this success in his first important political venture. He wrote in his Journal:

The flattering vote which I have recd on this occasion is truly a source of proud consolation to me. I am loved and respected by my fellow citizens more than I merit.

This evening I leave here for the Convention. It meets on Monday and many of the most prominent men in the State will be there—McDuffie, Hayne, Miller, O'Neal, Richardson, Middleton, and others. To be associated with such men is no inconsiderable honor. My election in this district, will mortify a few personal and political enemies, who have been traducing my character for the last two years, and attempting to destroy my life. I can discover in the countenance of some who ought to be my friends great envy and chagrin. Did they not differ with me in politics they would be my friends. But there are some who are envious of my growing popularity. I have a few personal friends in this place who will do any thing to oblige me. Among them are P. E. Duncan, Doctor Crook, Col. Dunham William Blassingame and others.¹³

The nullification convention met in Columbia on Monday, November 19. Perry went down a day or two in advance, and on Sunday evening he and Middleton called at Hunt's Hotel to see Judge Huger. The caucus of the Union party they arranged for that evening was attended by thirty delegates and visitors. Huger addressed them in an earnest plea not to take their seats in the convention, saying that he had been sent to urge this by the Union party of Charleston. Judge Richardson importuned them to take their seats, and at a subsequent meeting next morning they decided to do so. The twenty-six Union delegates were mostly silent onlookers in the convention. When the Committee of Twenty-One reported the Nullification Ordinance, drawn up by Chancellor William Harper, declaring the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832 null and void, to take effect on February 1 through enactment

¹² *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 10, 17, 1832; *Journal*, I, October 27, November 6, 1832; *Autobiography*, 1849, p. 81; *Autobiography*, 1874, pp. 140-141.

¹³ I, November 15, 1832.

by the legislature, and requiring all civil and military officials of the state, except members of the legislature, to take an oath (to be prescribed by the legislature) to enforce the Ordinance, Perry was shocked by such radical measures. Then followed the equally radical address by Turnbull to the people of South Carolina, *commanding* obedience and allegiance to the state, and the address by McDuffie to the people of the other states vindicating the action of South Carolina and threatening open resistance if the General Government attempted force. The convention adopted all the measures, and on the last day the 136 Nullifiers signed the Ordinance "with great pomp and show."¹⁴

None of the Union delegates signed. But, incongruous though it seems, their names, of course, appear on the roll of the convention. When the members were being registered on the first day, Greenville District was first called; and since Perry had received the highest number of votes in the district, he was given the privilege of first enrolling his name. "It stands therefore at the head of all the names in the Convention called to nullify the Tariff," he humorously observes.¹⁵

The Union members, being in a hopeless minority, had held a caucus every night during the sessions of the convention to present a united front next day. The question that most perturbed them was the test oath, the purpose of which was to disqualify members of the Union party from holding any civil or military office in the state. O'Neill and Huger were indignant at the idea of any honorable man's taking such an oath. The caucus voted to send Huger and Poinsett as delegates to North Carolina and Virginia to enlist their aid in preserving the Union and liberty of the country.¹⁶

When Perry returned to Greenville, he found the people much exasperated. A few days later a United States flag

¹⁴ *Journals of the Conventions of the People of South Carolina, held in 1832, 1833, 1852* (Columbia, 1860), pp. 20-27, 49-77; Autobiography, 1874, p. 141; Journal, I, November 28, 1832; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 83-85.

¹⁵ *South Carolina Convention Journal, 1832, 1833, 1852*, p. 7; Autobiography, 1849, p. 85.

¹⁶ Journal, I, November 28, 1832; Autobiography, 1849, p. 84.

floated in triumph over the public square from a high liberty pole erected the night before. The patriotic response of Greenville found an echo in Perry's heart. Soon after his return from Columbia, he recorded in his Journal: "Thus ended the great State Convention, a convention which will in future days be placed on a footing with the Hartford Convention. . . . I am willing to die to preserve the union, that glorious inheritance for which my father fought in the days that tried men's souls."¹⁷

The Greenville delegates published and distributed a thousand copies of a flaming address composed by Perry, denouncing the action of the convention. They claimed that it did not represent the will of the people of the state, since the unfair system of apportionment gave the "rotten boroughs" in the parishes a preponderance of influence and since the people had been led to believe that nullification was peaceful and now found that it threatened civil war.¹⁸

In the *Mountaineer* of December 1, Perry came out in strong editorials against the Nullification Ordinance, the addresses of Turnbull and McDuffie, and the test oath. With burning indignation he wrote:

The great Ordinance, or Act of Nullification, adopted in Convention on Saturday last, will be seen in this week's paper. It may be very properly termed, the Declaration of Independence and a Dissolution of the Union, from and after the first day of February next. It is State Veto with a *vengeance*. The purest and best men in our country are to be *proscribed* and hurled from office, in order to make room for subservient menials of the Jacobin Clubs. An inquisitorial oath, which alone should insult the honorable feelings of a man with the spirit and feelings of a gentleman, is to be administered to every officer, civil and military, in South Carolina. A Bill of *pains and penalties* is soon to follow from the hands of the Legislature, and the next step may be a Confiscation of property and a forfeiture of life. This is the glorious doctrine of *Nullification*, which has already torn society to pieces, and embittered the nearest and dearest relations of life.

¹⁷ 1, November 28, 1832.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*; Autobiography, 1849, p. 85; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 1, 1832.

He showed the absurdity of the Nullifiers' doctrine that they owed no allegiance to the United States except through the state, and called defiantly for resistance to the oath:

How then dare any man to take the "Test Oath" required in the Ordinance of South Carolina, whilst he is shown to support the United States? The *first oath* ever taken by the Editor of this paper, was to support the Constitution of the *United States*, and he never will, nor never can take another *in violation* of it, let come what may.

On December 3 the people of Greenville held a meeting in the courthouse to protest against the nullification convention and to elect delegates to the Union convention in Columbia on December 10. They adopted unanimously a series of resolutions drawn by Perry assailing the convention, and protesting against the test oath and the bill of pains and penalties.¹⁹ Perry reports that the people were very inflammable and ready to fight for the Union. As for his own position, he wrote: "I am every day becoming more obnoxious to the nullifiers. They hate me as they do poison and I am sure there is not much love lost." He was sensitive and resentful over the enmity he was arousing; but nothing could stop him, for he felt the utter rectitude of his convictions. He was elected one of the delegates to the Union convention, but did not anticipate a very pleasant sojourn in the nullification atmosphere of Columbia.

I have no doubt that the Editors in Columbia will be abusing me most shamefully for some of my editorial remarks about the time I get there. But I will not notice them. I have shown that I am not afraid to fight and consequently I am not going to challenge any blackguard of an editor. The next man I fight or challenge shall be a man of some distinction. I am done with lackeys. There is no honor to be acquired in a contest with such men, and I am unwilling to become their executioner. The practice of duelling is a bad one, but a necessary evil, and must some time be adopted in order to avoid a worse one.²⁰

¹⁹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 8, 1832.

²⁰ Journal, I, December 4, 5, 1832.

When the Unionists assembled on December 10, civil war seemed imminent. The legislature had adopted a series of measures virtually preparing the state for armed conflict. It had passed acts to enforce the Nullification Ordinance; it had drawn up the test oath; it had authorized the Governor to accept volunteer companies to "suppress insurrection and repel invasion"; and it had appropriated \$200,000 for the purchase of arms. The only ray of hope for the Unionists was the lack of support given the Nullifiers by the other Southern states.²¹

It was in determined mood that the convention, composed of most of the distinguished Union men in the state, opened in the Presbyterian Church on Monday morning. Various delegates presented resolutions from their districts, and Perry submitted those of the Greenville meeting.²² In the evening session Petigru made a speech against the Nullifiers which Perry considered "very beautiful." He said in part:

Nullification is not the State. Nor have I ever believed that my country was the swamps of the lower, nor the rocks of the upper, nor the pines of the middle portion of the State, but I have been taught to believe that my country was a wise and rational system of liberty.²³

Judge Huger echoed the sentiment of Petigru in refusing allegiance to a state that no longer gave its citizens liberty. He had remarked a thousand times, he said, that he would go with the state; but the state was not now acting. He would lay down his life for South Carolina, but not for the tyrants who ruled her. Perry was in complete accord with Petigru and Huger. He had been greatly disturbed by the talk of moderation from O'Neill and other judges that morning.²⁴

Next day Huger answered Judge David Johnson's plea for prudence and moderation in one of the greatest speeches of his career. He spoke of the tyranny and oppression of the dominant party, the disgrace of the test oath, and the horrors of

²¹ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 218-227.

²² Journal, I, December 21, 1832.

²³ Autobiography, 1849, p. 87.

²⁴ *Ibid.*; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 220; Journal, I, December 21, 1832.

disunion. "Can I be called a freeman when I am to be tried by a *perjured Judge* and a *packed jury*?" he asked. "There was no flinching after that speech," reports Perry. That evening Perry made a speech of some length, urging the delegates to resolve never to take the test oath and never to submit to a dissolution of the Union. The following day one feeling seemed to pervade the convention—"a determined spirit of resistance." Next morning Christopher G. Memminger, a distinguished lawyer from Charleston, submitted a plan for organizing the Union party throughout the state for self-defense. He proposed the establishment in each district of civil societies like the "Washington Society" in Charleston, which were to become military companies in time of danger. Perry's proposal that the name be changed to "Union Societies" was adopted. An Executive Committee, consisting of Poinsett as commander-in-chief, Petigru in the low country, Huger and John L. Manning in the middle country, and Robert Cunningham in the up country, was appointed to command the whole state. A subcommittee of three was appointed in each district, and Perry was made chairman of that for Greenville.²⁵

The following day the committee appointed to take into consideration the Nullification Ordinance and resolutions thereon made its report. First, there was a "Report" written by Petigru, full of "sarcasm, quaintness and bold expression."²⁶ It pronounced the Nullification Ordinance "not only revolutionary, but essentially belligerent," and declared that its natural consequences would be "Disunion and Civil War." As to the test oath, "none but he that believes the Constitution to be a rope of sand" could take it. Then there was a "Remonstrance and Protest" against the proceedings of the convention, written by Memminger and Poinsett. It denounced the Ordinance, test oath, and military acts of the legislature as "tyranny and oppression," and expressed the firm deter-

²⁵ Journal, I, December 21, 1832; *The Report of the Committee of the Convention of the Union and State Rights Party, Assembled at Columbia, 10th December, 1832 with their Remonstrance and Protest* (n.p., n.d., pamphlet, South Carolinian Library, University of South Carolina), pp. 3-7.

²⁶ Journal, I, December 21, 1832.

mination of the Unionists to protect their rights "by all legal and constitutional means."²⁷ This was signed by 180 members, a roll which Judge Huger remarked would enjoy the "immortality of glory," not of "infamy," like that of the Nullifiers.

The Union convention adjourned to meet again in March. Before that time Perry expected the state to be in the midst of revolution.²⁸ On the evening before he left Columbia he conferred with Poinsett on the organization of Union Societies in his district; and Poinsett, who had been in frequent communication with Jackson, assured him that guns, munitions, and money would be at his disposal. Intent upon his new duties, Perry stopped at Rosemont in Laurens District to confer with Robert Cunningham.²⁹ When he returned to Greenville, he placed beneath the American Eagle at the top of his editorial column: "The Union Must Be Preserved."³⁰

President Jackson's proclamation on December 10 announcing his determination to enforce the laws which had been declared null and void was met with defiance by the legislature, at whose request Governor Hayne delivered a powerful counter proclamation upholding the theory of the Nullifiers. "We will stand upon the soil of Carolina and maintain the sovereign authority of the State, or be buried beneath its ruins," he announced. The legislature authorized the governor to enlist volunteers for the defense of the state.³¹ Perry hailed the President's proclamation with delight and published it in full. Vigorously he denounced the military preparations made by the legislature, warning his fellow-citizens of the dire consequences that would follow:

If all these military preparations of *money, arms and soldiers* be not an awful warning to the people of South Carolina, we know

²⁷ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 29, 1832; James P. Carson, *Life, Letters and Speeches of James Louis Petigru, the Union Man of South Carolina* (Washington, 1920), pp. 108-110; Rippey, Joel R. *Poinsett*, p. 153; *Report of Committee of Union Convention, December, 1832*, pp. 7-11.

²⁸ *Journal*, I, December 21, 1832.

²⁹ *Ibid.*; *Autobiography*, 1849, p. 88; Rippey, Joel R. *Poinsett*, pp. 144-153.

³⁰ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 15, 1832.

³¹ Jervey, Robert Y. *Hayne*, pp. 321-326, 334-340; Bancroft, *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*, pp. 138-139.

nothing of the history of revolutions. Will not this force, when embodied, be a standing army in time of peace, kept up by a State, in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and dangerous to the liberties of the people? . . . But will the people of South Carolina, professing an attachment to republican governments, *volunteer* their services in a cause so fatal to *liberty*, to *honor*, and to themselves? Are they willing to become the *hirelings* of a military chieftain, in order to fight against the stars and stripes of their country—against that flag which has guided them in the paths of patriotism to victory and renown? Have they forgotten that "*levying war* against the United States" is Treason? Are they ready to incur its *guilt* and meet a *traitor's doom*?—If so, it behoves the Union Party to *be prepared* to defend *themselves* against a *brother's tyranny*, and to *die* like Freemen, rather than *live* like Slaves.³²

But neither Jackson's proclamation nor the opposition of the Unionists stopped the Nullifiers. The governor continued his enlistment of volunteers to "repel invasion." The Unionists were no less determined to support the Federal Government with military force if necessary. Under the leadership of Poinsett, the Executive Committee supervised the organization of Union Societies and arranged for the equipment of military companies. During January and February the two parties faced each other at dagger's point. President Jackson, at the solicitation of Poinsett, reinforced the forts at Charleston and supplied the arsenals with arms and ammunition.³³

Meanwhile it was generally understood that only an amelioration of the tariff would prevent bloodshed in South Carolina; and there were indications that Congress would give the desired relief. Calhoun, having resigned the Vice-Presidency to take Hayne's place in the United States Senate, was fighting the cause of the Nullifiers, and was hopeful of success. Though his followers did not cease their preparations for resistance, they postponed the date for enforcement of the Nullification Ordinance—influenced, no doubt, by the determined resistance of the Unionists, the utter lack of support from other Southern

³² Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 22, 29, 1832.

³³ *Ibid.*, December 29, 1832; Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, pp. 154-155.

states, and the likelihood of passage of the Force Bill by Congress. It was not, however, until the introduction of Clay's compromise tariff bill about the middle of February that the Nullifiers were pacified.³⁴

During the critical months of the winter, Perry labored with indefatigable energy. He was in frequent communication with Poinsett about organizing and equipping military companies. "We will not be the aggressors," wrote Poinsett, "but we will resist intolerable oppression. We will not bear arms agt. the United States."³⁵ Perry considered him a "masterly manager" and felt confident of his leadership in case of danger.³⁶

The citizens of Greenville District were in no less determined mood than Perry. With enthusiasm they responded to his call for the organization of Union Societies, and adopted resolutions expressing defiance to the Nullifiers. Thus spoke the Paris Mountain Union Society on January 5: "Resolved, That in defence of the Federal Union, *we have drawn our swords and flung away the scabbards*. Resolved . . . that we have but two words by way of reply to the Nullifiers, which are these: '*Come on.*'" At Greenville two days later the Union Society adopted resolutions breathing the same spirit of resistance:

Resolved, That no matter what may be our allegiance to South Carolina, we owe none to those who are now wielding her sovereignty; and we shall ever keep in mind that *they* are *not* "The State," but the destroyers of the Union and the *enemies* of Regulated Liberty.

Resolved, That Greenville never will obey any call on her Militia to march against the Government of the United States, and that she *defies the tyranny of the Nullifiers—scorns their insolence, and despises their menaces.*

Resolved, That the "Test Oath" is *wilful, deliberate perjury*, and

³⁴ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 262-280; *Greenville Mountaineer*, March 9, 1833.

³⁵ January 21, February 14, 1833, Perry Papers.

³⁶ *Journal*, I, January 30, 1833.

that no Civil or Military officer in the District will submit to it whilst he has any respect for his reputation, or cares for the *scorn* and *contempt* of his fellow citizens.³⁷

Such was the party tension that Perry, in his New Year editorial, could see only "gloom and darkness" ahead. He announced his intention of abandoning the *Mountaineer* as soon as the "present excitement" was over.³⁸

His Journal of January 10 reveals his despondency:

I have lately neglected my studies too much. Politics have almost rendered me unfit for business. If the strife continues long I have almost determined to leave the state. This I will not do untill all danger of a contest between the two Governments is over. I will not desert my party in time of danger. But if the present horrid state of society continues it would be better for me to seek some other home. No one can tell or imagine the chagrine and mortification I have experienced for the last two or three years. . . .

I cannot read with any pleasure and there is no one whom I care about visiting. . . . My only employment now is writing for the *Mountaineer*. This is a rather unpleasant task and I intend to quit it as soon as times become quiet.³⁹

The skies immediately brightened, however, when it became evident that Clay's compromise, lowering the tariff duties gradually to 20 per cent *ad valorem* in ten years, would pass. Perry was hopeful now that harmony would be restored to the distracted country, since Calhoun approved the measure and McDuffie pronounced it "the olive branch to the South." Jackson's signature of the bill on March 2, along with the Force Bill authorizing the President to use the Army and Navy if necessary to collect duties, removed the danger of any further action by the Nullifiers. Perry wrote happily: "The Union is safe, and our country is triumphant. . . . We shall all be again Carolinians and Americans."⁴⁰

Hamilton had already ordered the reassembling of the state

³⁷ *Ibid.*, January 10, 1833; *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 12, 1833.

³⁸ January 5, 1833.

³⁹ 1, January 10, 1833.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, February 25, 1833; *Greenville Mountaineer*, March 9, 1833.

convention on March 11—ostensibly to receive Benjamin W. Leigh, commissioner from Virginia.⁴¹ But, as Henry Middleton wrote Perry, Leigh's mission "came very opportunely to afford the authors of all this mischief a decent pretext of abandoning their course."⁴² Before the passage of the compromise the Union Executive Committee had sent a circular urging the Union delegates not to attend, as they feared the Nullifiers would attempt secession after being frustrated in nullification; but now that the danger was removed, they advised the Unionists to attend and exert whatever influence they could—especially to have the Nullification Ordinance repealed.⁴³

On the opening day Commissioner Leigh and Calhoun were invited to take seats on the floor of the convention. Calhoun had hastened from Washington, completing the last part of his journey in a wagon, to urge acceptance of the tariff compromise. Perry thought he looked thin and careworn and "had lost some what of his greatness in appearance" since last he had seen him.⁴⁴ He had watched Calhoun's activities in the Senate during the last few months with unqualified disapproval, commenting in the *Mountaineer*:

Mr. Calhoun has, since taking his seat as Senator from South Carolina, shown a great want of Senatorial dignity and propriety. His conduct has been that of a rash, inexperienced young man. He has spoken with a warmth and passion which do no credit to his wisdom. He has had very little regard for the rules and order of that body in which it was once his duty to keep order.⁴⁵

When the Committee of Twenty-one reported an ordinance repealing the Nullification Ordinance and accepting the adjustment of the tariff as a glorious triumph, the debate revealed a split within the ranks of the Nullifiers. Barnwell

⁴¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, March 2, 1833; Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, p. 287.

⁴² February 23, 1833, Perry Papers.

⁴³ J. R. Poinsett to Perry, February 14, 1833, *ibid.*; printed circular signed by Poinsett, Huger, and Petigru, addressed to Perry, February 21, 1833, *ibid.*; J. B. O'Neill to *idem*, March 7, 1833, *ibid.*; Daniel E. Huger to *idem*, March 4, 1833, *ibid.*; Journal, I, March 6, 1833.

⁴⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 89; Journal, I, March 30, 1833.

⁴⁵ February 16, 1833.

Smith (Rhett) made a "most furious speech" saying that he had lost all attachment to the Union—thus heralding his fanatical crusade for disunion. James Hamilton and Robert Barnwell, however, spoke eloquently for reconciliation, and were successful in securing the adoption of the ordinance and report.⁴⁶

On Saturday a bomb was thrown into the convention when the report and ordinance on the Force Bill came up for discussion and the latter was found to contain a new oath of allegiance, requiring every officeholder to swear that he was a citizen of the free and sovereign state of South Carolina, owed allegiance to South Carolina, and abjured all other allegiance incompatible with the same. Robert Barnwell moved to strike out the oath and refer it to the legislature to pass on in the constitutional way, and O'Neill made a stirring speech on the inexpediency of creating a new oath. But Judge Harper spoke warmly for the measure; and then Turnbull "took the floor and spoke as much like a tyrant and a scoundrel as I ever heard any one," reports Perry. "He abused the Union party shamefully." Mr. P. Phillips, a Unionist of Chesterfield, replied to him with great severity.⁴⁷

The following Monday witnessed an honest effort at conciliation and compromise by the moderate leaders of both parties. Armistead Burt came to Perry and said that the Nullifiers were very anxious for the Union members to express themselves freely on the Force Bill; if they would agree to resist it, this would have great weight with the Nullifiers in dropping the oath. Judge Colcock requested that O'Neill and other members of the Union party explain the views and intentions of their party.⁴⁸ After a few remarks by O'Neill, Perry arose and made a strong plea for Barnwell's motion:

When I left home, Sir, it was under the belief that the Tariff had been satisfactorily adjusted, that the ordinance of nullification

⁴⁶ *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1832, 1833, 1852, pp. 96, 103-110; *Journal*, I, March 30, 1833.

⁴⁷ *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1832, 1833, 1852, p. 111; *Journal*, I, March 30, 1833.

⁴⁸ *Journal*, I, March 30, 1833; *Autobiography*, 1849, p. 92.

would be repealed, and that our country would be restored to peace and harmony. I so told my constituents. . . .

I am sure Sir that there is no one in this Convention who can wish to keep up any longer that unpleasant excitement which has so long divided and distracted the good people of South Carolina, which has entered into the very vitals of society, which has separated friend from friend, brother from his brother and father from his son. . . .

But, Sir, if this oath is adopted I fear it will perpetuate our dissensions and keep alive that animosity and bitter feeling which has already ruined and distracted our country. It is well known to this convention that there is a strong prejudice in the country at this time against oaths of a political nature no matter how harmless they may be. . . .

If this matter, Mr. President, be referred to the Legislature to pass on in the constitutional way by two successive Legislatures and thereby be ingrafted into the Constitution it will come with less prejudice to the people. I do not however pretend to say that it will by this means be unobjectionable and acceptable to the people.

I have objections many and strong, to the oath itself, but I will not urge them to the convention, because I think the reasons which have been given for referring the whole to the Legislature, sufficient to dispose of it in an other way.

One word Sir with regard to the people whom I have the honor to represent. I know their feelings and sentiments well, and I know that they are as anxious as I am to have peace and quietness once more. They have been a strong thorough going union people, and in their conduct there may have been something of violence, but I am sure that they are at this time disposed to forget and forgive. And should this oath be abandoned I pledge myself that so far as I am concerned, so far as my constituents are concerned there shall be a cessation of hostilities.

Oaths have in all ages been the instruments of tyrants. . . .

It is true Sir that I do owe allegiance to South Carolina—allegiance of a high and sacred nature, which no oath that can be administered to me can increase or diminish. That patriotism which can only be received by an oath is not worth having. Our government is founded in the love and affection of its people. It is Sir a government of opinion and not of force.

As to the opinion of the Union members on the Force Bill, he assured the convention that there could be no motive now for enforcing its provisions; such an act by the President would be wanton tyranny, which he would resist as he always resisted tyranny from any source.

In conclusion, he earnestly urged that the oath be abandoned. "When we sepparate to go home, let it be as a band of brothers returning to preach peace and good will."⁴⁹

Perry's speech was followed by a speech of "coarse abuse" of the Union party by John L. Wilson. If the oath brought civil war, let it come, he said. The Nullifiers then held a caucus on the propriety of giving up the test oath, and the result doomed the state to party distraction for a period of two years to come. An amendment drawn by Chancellor Job Johnston stated that *allegiance* of citizens of the state was due to the state, and *obedience* only, and not allegiance, was due by them to any other power or authority; the legislature was empowered to provide for administration to the citizens and officers of the state of suitable oaths or affirmations "binding them to the observance of such allegiance, and abjuring all other allegiance," and to define violation of allegiance and proper punishment thereof. Though the Union members spoke bravely against the proposition, considering it worse than the oath itself, it was passed by a vote of 90 to 60. The ordinance nullifying the Force Bill, thus amended, was passed by a vote of 132 to 19.⁵⁰

As Johnston's amendment was being read, Judge David Johnson remarked to Perry: "You may go home and convert your plough shares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears for we shall have to fight." Perry had noted the uncompromising spirit of the extreme state rights men. The impetuous Hayne, in his presidential address before adjournment, warned the convention that the contest with the Federal Government had just commenced—that their services would

⁴⁹ Journal, I, March 30, 1833.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*; South Carolina Convention Journal, 1832, 1833, 1852, pp. 117, 120-

yet be needed by South Carolina. Such was the attitude also of McDuffie.⁵¹ The nullification controversy was ushering in the bitter period of sectional conflict that terminated in secession. The mantle of Turnbull had fallen upon the shoulders of Rhett, the fiery disunionist who believed that the preservation of the rights of the South—especially the institution of slavery—could be obtained only by the formation of a Southern confederacy. Such was his faith in the righteousness of his cause that nothing could swerve him from his purpose. To its accomplishment he was to devote all the ardor of his being and the eloquence of his oratory for a period of thirty years. But for the next two decades it was Calhoun who dominated the Palmetto State. Having so ably voiced the determination of the state—rather than his own—during the nullification conflict, he exercised a paramount influence thereafter. In spite of his prudence and conservatism, his aim was the same as Rhett's—preservation of the rights of the South—though he dreaded to employ the means advocated by the radical Rhett. To him secession was a last resort; the South should first endeavor to protect its peculiar institution by strong, concerted action.⁵²

Perry saw the trend of the state. After the Convention of 1833 he wrote in his Journal:

I sincerely believe that there is a disposition to dissolve the Union and form a Southern Confederacy. It will show itself more plainly in the course of a few years. The leading nullifiers have been induced to stop for the present because they saw that the other states would not go with them.⁵³

The leaders of the Union party had decided to accept the action of the convention in repealing the Ordinance as the end of the nullification controversy, hoping that when public excitement was thus allayed, the legislature would not dare take any action in regard to the test oath.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the

⁵¹ Journal, I, March 30, 1833; Autobiography, 1849, p. 93.

⁵² White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 13-15, 23-28; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 448, 452-453.

⁵³ I, March 30, 1833.

⁵⁴ J. B. O'Neill to Perry, March 20, April 1, 1833, Perry Papers.

Central Committee publicly announced that the Union convention called to meet in Charleston on March 18 would be postponed, since the state convention had accepted the tariff and there was now prospect of peace.⁵⁵ Perry hoped to bring about reconciliation between parties by a policy of quietude and acquiescence. "Moderation must be y'r and my motto," wrote O'Neill to Perry. "Were I in y'r place, I would give up my place as Editor in a short time. For the question of Union or disunion is I think ended. Nullification is dead: and if public excitement be let down, the Oath of Allegiance will not be passed."⁵⁶

Perry had long desired to take this step. With a feeling of relief he wrote his farewell to the patrons of the *Mountaineer* on March 30:

"TO THE PUBLIC"

This number of the *Mountaineer* dissolves my connexion with it. The time has at length arrived when I can quit the Editorial department of this paper without any dereliction of principle or abandonment of purpose—and surely without any prejudice to the public, or inconvenience to my friends and patrons. The great political question, which has so long divided and distracted our country, which has shaken to its very foundation the permanency and republican principles of our Government, which has torn society to pieces with an unfeeling and withering touch, which has blighted the nearest and dearest connexions of life, and made friend faithless to his friend, is at an end.

The Tariff has been permanently and satisfactorily adjusted—the Union is safe—Nullification has gone, with an expiring flourish, to the tomb of the Capulets—The spirit of Disunion is hushed, has shrunk before the patriotism and wisdom of Carolina—Civil discord and party dissensions are about to be buried in oblivion—Once more we are to be a united and happy people.

Under these circumstances, I can see no impropriety in resigning a station, which was assumed with great reluctance, and which nothing but the peculiar situation of our country could have induced me to have continued as long as I did. The life of an Editor

⁵⁵ Greenville *Mountaineer*, March 23, 1833.

⁵⁶ March 20, 1833, Perry Papers.

is, at all times, one of great vexation, great trouble and great responsibility, and in time of high political excitement, it is one of deep and painful mortification. To me it has been a source of wounded pride and lasting regret. It has cost me much of feeling and of trouble. Nor has it ever been congenial with my nature to be in constant excitement and turmoil.

The course I have pursued as the conductor of a public Journal is before the community, and by it I am willing to be judged. For a long time I did all that man could do to prevent those evils which befell society and our common country. But every day I saw the breach which an honest difference of opinion had made, growing wider and wider, until it became impossible to stand on either side. It was then, and not till then, that I gave up everything of reconciliation as lost, irretrievably lost. Love of country, self respect, and every feeling that can urge an honorable man, induced me to take the stand I did. In my conduct there may be much of violence but there can be nothing of intentional wrong.

No one rejoices more heartily than I do at the glorious prospect we now have of once more seeing our distracted country restored to peace and harmony. There is no one who will make greater sacrifices, consistent with principle and honor, than myself to bring about such an event. I am heartily sick and disgusted with the political excitement and party dissensions which we have all witnessed for the last four years. If there be not now a cessation of hostilities and an end of all excitement, it will be owing to sheer wickedness and folly. . . .

B. F. PERRY

After his unhappy experience with the *Mountaineer*, Perry resolved never again to have any connection with the editorial department of a newspaper.⁵⁷ On the day of his resignation he wrote in his Journal: "I have quit the Mountaineer. . . . I am now disposed to be at peace with the world and quit politics. I shall devote myself to my profession."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 40.

⁵⁸ I, March 30, 1833.

CHAPTER TEN

Proscription Begins: Congressional Races 1834, 1835

THOUGH THE repeal of the Nullification Ordinance ended the conflict between South Carolina and the Federal Government, peace was not established between the Nullifiers and Unionists for nearly two years thereafter. Over the heads of the Unionists hung the threat of the test oath, by which the ruthless majority party intended forcing its creed upon the minority. Republican government was seriously endangered, and the Unionists were strong in their determination not to submit to tyranny within the state. Until the convening of the legislature in December, however, their policy was one of conciliation; for they hoped to induce the legislature to refrain from acting on the oath.

Perry was fully in accord with the policy of moderation. After four years of party strife, he welcomed a period of repose—though he feared it was only temporary. To the Unionists of Greenville District, meeting on sales day in April, he expressed the hope that they would have no further occasion to meet as a Union party.¹ But to Poinsett he wrote:

I think that the Union is safe for the present but that the contest will come on again in the course of a few years. Untill that time the Union party will have to feel the tyranny and oppression of the nullifiers. If the Legislature proceed to pass new oaths of office, make new acts of treason and declare what allegiance is, the Union party will have to do one of three things—fight, quit the State or become the vassals of the nullifiers. For the present it is perhaps better to be moderate and act in a spirit of conciliation. . . .

¹ Journal, I, April 6, 1833; Autobiography, 1849, p. 94.

I should like to hear from you on the subject and also hear what you think about the subject of allegiance.²

The same sentiments he expressed to Huger, and to Daniel Webster in a letter congratulating him on his late efforts in behalf of the Union. They corroborated his views; they were all convinced that the ultimate aim of the Nullifiers was disunion. Poinsett and Huger were in favor of conciliation for the present, and Webster expressed his high regard for Perry and "the patriotic Gentlemen" with whom he acted.³

Though the people were "settling down to a more composed and moderate tone" in the spring of 1833, it was a rather delusive calm.⁴ Perry aptly observed in his Journal: "Nullification is not dead but *sleepeth*. The grand object is disunion, and it will be attempted again."⁵ He saw in the incipient secession movement the autocratic dictation of Calhoun, as did Huger, who wrote in April: "I am the State says Mr. Calhoun; he who does not fight to make me *first* is a slave, and he who obeys my will 'to the death' is a freeman!"⁶

Despite these forebodings, the Unionist leaders bore themselves with remarkable restraint during the spring and summer of 1833. Perry wrote on July 25:

There has been a calm in politics for months past. The nullifiers are disposed to treat me politely. I dined with Judge Earle on the 4th and was invited to a dinner at W. Thompsons the other day but did not go—I am very anxious to be at peace and in friendship with all mankind once more. . . .⁷

Even the staunch mountaineer Unionists of Greenville were quiescent until Warren Davis reopened party animosities during the congressional campaign in August by advocating passage of the test oath by the legislature.⁸ But Perry was not

² March 24, 1833, Poinsett Papers (Pennsylvania Historical Society).

³ J. R. Poinsett to Perry, April 1, 1833, Perry Papers; D. E. Huger to *idem*, April 10, 1833, *ibid.*; Daniel Webster to *idem*, April 27, 1833, *ibid.*

⁴ Petigru to Elliott, April 15, 1833, Allston-Pringle-Hill Collection.

⁵ *I*, April 27, 1833.

⁶ D. E. Huger to Perry, April 10, 1833, Perry Papers.

⁷ Journal, I.

⁸ Lesesne, "The Nullification Controversy in an Up-Country District," *loc. cit.*,

perturbed, and wrote on August 5: "The speech of Mr. Davis, today, was a very mild and good one—he lost nothing with the Union Party by it. The nullies thought it too moderate."⁹

Joseph Grisham of Pendleton was the candidate of the Unionists, campaigning against the oath. Perry had been urged to run by many voters of Greenville and Pendleton, but though greatly gratified, was unwilling to re-enter the political arena. When the Unionists showed unexpected strength, gaining about 450 votes over the legislative election the preceding fall, he regretted that he had not run. Grisham was defeated by only forty-three votes. Perry wrote in his Journal: "I have no doubt but that a popular man of the Union party might have been easily elected. I now regret that I did not consent to be a candidate. Grisham has always been unpopular in Pendleton. Against myself there would have been less prejudice." It was generally conceded that Perry would have won. The Union party was at its strongest in this election, and in the following years showed a steady decline.¹⁰

When the legislature convened in December, the Nullifiers, with their two-thirds majority, pushed through the test oath recommended by the state convention—though not in so odious a form. To rid the state of Unionist militia officers, a bill required that all militia officers swear to bear "faithful and true allegiance" to the state of South Carolina. At the same time a constitutional amendment was passed (to be confirmed by the successive legislature) requiring every official to take the oath, with the additional clause, to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of this State and of the United States." The Unionists objected to the oath because of the Nullifiers' interpretation of the term *allegiance* as indivisible

p. 22. A congressional election was held in 1833 because the South Carolina legislature, in contemplation of possible secession, had repealed the law for electing congressmen in December, 1831. The next year it had ordered the election held in September, 1833, or earlier if necessary (Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 442).

⁹ Journal, I.

¹⁰ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 40, 46, 100; Journal, I, October 27, 1832, July 25, September 5, 1833.

and due solely to the state. The Unionists contended that allegiance was divisible—due by every citizen to the state and to the United States. They determined never to take the oath.¹¹

When Perry went to Columbia to attend the Court of Appeals, he met many Unionist friends, and found them all very indignant. He did not share this feeling, however, for he thought that the oath meant nothing as the Unionists interpreted it, and might be taken without any dereliction of principle. Having disposed of his cases, he left the controversial atmosphere of the capital and took a leisurely pleasure trip to Charleston, Savannah, and Augusta. He was seeking relaxation after his strenuous life of the last few years. He enjoyed the novel experience of riding on a train from Branchville to Charleston, and seeing for the first time "the great metropolis" of the state, where he received many attentions from his Unionist friends. An enjoyable steamboat trip took him to Beaufort and Savannah. He met Petigru, who was in Savannah attending to his plantation; the friends had a long walk together, and Petigru agreed with Perry that "the oath was nothing except with our opponents construction."¹²

When Perry reached home late in January, he found the Union party of Greenville greatly excited over the test oath and "ready to fight if they had known whom to fight." At a sales day meeting he had "great difficulty in restraining them within the bounds of reason & moderation in their Resolutions." But, as chairman of the resolutions committee, he finally persuaded them to agree to use legal means to repeal the military act and defeat the proposed constitutional amendment.¹³ A few days afterward he wrote in his Journal: "It is with extreme reluctance that I enter again into the turmoil of party strife. I had hoped the fuss was all over. . . . I will

¹¹ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 316-323; Autobiography, 1849, p. 100; Autobiography, 1874, p. 134.

¹² Journal, I, January 17, 1834; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 130-133; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 53-54, 100; Mitchell King to Perry, December 27, 1833, Perry Papers.

¹³ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 133-134; *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 8, 1834.

never give my sanction to any measures calculated to plunge the Country into a civil war or a murderous broil.”¹⁴

The rank and file of the Unionist party throughout the state were deeply agitated over the test oath. Defiant meetings were held, which the leaders could scarcely restrain. Finally, at the suggestion of Robert Cunningham and several other moderates, a state convention of the Unionist party was called to meet in Greenville on March 24.¹⁵ As a prominent Nullifier remarked: “Suffice it to say it is generally regarded as a maneuver to moderate the inconsiderate rashness of some of the party.”¹⁶ Over one hundred delegates attended from all sections of the state. “The war fever was strong with many persons,” writes Perry. Poinsett, Huger, and Perry took the most prominent part in the proceedings. Huger, who was elected president, was “decidedly one of the hottest men in the Convention.” Much excited, he made a “bitter speech,” saying that blood ought to be spilled. Many re-echoed his sentiment. Poinsett was more moderate and more in accord with the views of Perry. Their counsels finally prevailed, and the delegates decided to resort first to the courts and ballot box in resisting the test oath, but meanwhile to organize themselves to meet the worst. When the oath was declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeals on June 2, the situation was temporarily relieved. Perry rejoiced over the “glorious victory” of the Unionists.¹⁷

II

In the spring of 1834 Perry was nominated by the joint committee of the Union party of Pendleton and Greenville districts to run for Congress in the October election. The friends of Joseph Grisham were displeased. Perry had written Grisham the preceding November, saying that he had been

¹⁴ I, February 8, 1834.

¹⁵ Robert Cunningham to Perry, February 13, 1834, Perry Papers; Thomas Williams, Jr., to *idem*, March 8, 1834, *ibid.*; J. S. Richardson to *idem*, March 8, 1834, *ibid.*; Greenville *Mountaineer*, March 1, 8, 1834.

¹⁶ George F. Townes to John A. Townes, April 3, 1834, Townes Papers.

¹⁷ Greenville *Mountaineer*, March 29, 1834; Journal, I, March 28, October 26, 1834; Autobiography, 1849, p. 100.

urged to run by "many of our mutual friends," who thought his chance of success would be better, since the people had been "excited and prejudiced" against Grisham in the last canvass. He assured Grisham that he had only the welfare of the party at heart, and asked for his candid opinion in the matter. "Write to me as you would to your brother and as I have written to you," he urged. Grisham replied that he cared only for the public good and would be governed entirely by his friends, many of whom said they would take no further interest in the contest if he gave it up. "I have tried to put your claims in the most favourable light," he averred, "but a number of them say they cannot support you—Those on whom I can exercise an influence, say they do not believe it will do for you to run."

In subsequent letters Grisham continued to give Perry discouraging reports about his prospects in Pickens District, betraying a strong feeling of pique over Perry's nomination. "I am daily interrogated why it was that I did not continue a candidate & many of my friends will not consent to vote for you," he wrote. He explained that some objected to Perry because of their prejudice against lawyers; others did not consider him a thoroughgoing Union man; and still others would not support him because of his duel with Bynum.¹⁸

Perry answered that he thought the Union party was contending for *principle* and not for *men*, that he was sure this was the attitude of his own *personal* friends in Greenville.

When you were a candidate, Greenville, though unacquainted with you, turned out as she had never done before and showed her devotion to the great principle for which *you* had been nobly contending. . . .

Your letter has given me great pain, & I find it even more painful than I expected, to answer the objections you say are urged against me. In all probability it will be utterly impossible for me to do so to the persons who urge the objections—I shall therefore

¹⁸ Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 10, 1834; Perry to Col. Joseph Grisham, November 7, 1833, Perry Papers; Joseph Grisham to Perry, November 25, 1833, June 3, 1834, *ibid.*

necessarily have to depend in a great measure on your exertions and friendship. . . . The election I do not regard as a personal matter, but as a party contest for the preservation of our country & Government.¹⁹

Grisham remonstrated: "You cannot believe that I could or would wish to injure you—& with you the Union party." He went on to state, however, that some dissatisfaction among his friends was "occasioned by the manner they considered the party in Pendleton driven into the nomination"; that he had used "all fair means to reconcile them," but could not force them. "You do not expect me to quit my home now & ride about the country with no excuse but to promote your election . . .," he peevishly ended. Throughout the summer Perry heard rumors of disaffection in upper Pickens District. It was evident that Grisham was doing nothing to allay the unrest.²⁰

Perry campaigned with his usual earnestness and vigor. Warren Davis was again the candidate of the Nullifiers—a man whom Perry called "the life and soul of every circle in which he appeared," and whose ability in Congress he had often noted. Despite his conciliatory attitude of the past year, Perry fought the campaign as the "Anti-Test Oath" candidate.²¹ Developments since June had set the Unionists on fire, especially the liberty-loving mountaineers of the Greenville-Pendleton district. The Nullifiers had made the most abusive attacks on the Unionist judges who had rendered the test oath decision; now they were threatening not only to confirm the constitutional amendment in the forthcoming legislature, but to pass an act defining and punishing treason, and one remodeling or abolishing the Court of Appeals. The Unionists determined to make the test oath the issue, hoping that a strong

¹⁹ June 8, 1834, Perry Papers.

²⁰ Grisham to Perry, June 17, 1834, *ibid.*; John C. Hoyt to *idem*, July 12, 1834, *ibid.*; Thomas Watson to *idem*, June 23, 1834, *ibid.*

²¹ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, October 7, 1852; Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 10, August 6, 1830, October 4, 1834.

popular vote against it would frighten the legislature from confirming it or taking further tyrannical action.²²

Perry laid down his cardinal principles in a July 4 letter to a large gathering at Sherman's Store in Greenville District.

Old party distinctions should be dropped. . . . In a word, all difficulties between the State and the United States have been happily removed. . . . The contest now getting up, is more alarming than any that have gone before it. It is emphatically a struggle between *Liberty* and *Despotism*—between the *Freedom of Conscience* and the *Tyranny of a Political Test Oath*. It is a struggle on the one part, for the maintenance of *Republican Principles* and the *Independence* of our *Judicial Tribunals*; and on the other, it is an effort to supercede the *right of suffrage*, and make the Judges *subservient* to the *will* of the *Legislature*. . . .

. . . Nullifiers, as well as Union men, are alike interested in rescuing their government from the bonds of slavery, and in restoring to their fellow citizens, without distinction of parties, the liberties of conscience, in politics as well as in religion. . . .

As for the Oath of Allegiance, he could not see how anyone could deem it a matter of any importance to the state; a man's love for Carolina and his love for the Union should not interfere with each other. It was only because of the definition given the word *allegiance* by a portion of the people of South Carolina—preference to the state government—that it had been declared "*against conscience*" by many. "There can be no difference between a *religious* persecution and a *political* persecution," he opined.

"In conclusion, I give you as the dearest sentiment of my heart—*Freedom of Conscience*."²³

Early in June Perry had started campaigning in Pickens District and had spent several weeks riding over the country, making a house-to-house canvass in the isolated northern section. Often he spent the night or took a frugal meal in some mean mountain hovel, and occasionally a loyal Unionist of the

²² Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 335-351; J. S. Richardson to Perry, August 30, 1834, Perry Papers; *Journal*, I, December 16, 1834; *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 12, August 23, 1834.

²³ *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 12, 1834.

neighborhood accompanied him. His journeying took him to his old home and to Hatton's Ford, the scene of his duel with Bynum. Throughout July and August he campaigned vigorously, attending meetings, regimental musters, and camp preachings. He sent many copies of his published speeches to friends for distribution.²⁴

The Nullifiers, having organized Whig Associations in many quarters during the summer, tried to make state sovereignty the issue, accusing the Unionists of being consolidationists and Jackson men. "A Citizen" in the Pendleton *Messenger* propounded a series of questions to Perry to draw him and the Union party into an endorsement of Jackson and his policies. But Perry wisely answered: "I am the implicit follower of no man. . . . Such measures of his Administration as I may approve I will give my 'cordial support' to, and such as I do not approve, I shall firmly and respectfully oppose."²⁵

In a letter "To the Voters of Pendleton and Greenville" late in September, Perry warned them that such queries were made to divide the Union men and divert attention from the real issue.

But, fellow citizens, it is to be hoped, that whilst you are in danger of being *Proscribed* and *Disfranchised*, deprived of the *liberty of Conscience*, and *robbed* of your *rights* as *Freemen*, that you will not suffer your attention to be thus turned from such iniquitous legislation—legislation involving your Slavery and Vassalage.

He urged them to meet and sign protests to the legislature against passage of the oath. Such protests would show that nearly half the voters were opposed to "this proscription of Union men," and the legislature would not dare incorporate it in the constitution. "The Union Party do conscientiously believe, that they cannot take this Oath without the commis-

²⁴ Autobiography, 1849, p. 101; Journal, I, June 9, 1836, October 26, 1834; Autobiography, 1874, p. 141; Greenville *Mountaineer*, August 23, 1834; Pendleton *Messenger*, August 27, 1834; Edmund Webb to Perry, May 27, 1834, Perry Papers; Miles N. Norton to *idem*, June 13, 1834, *ibid.*; Thomas Watson to *idem*, June 23, 1834, *ibid.*

²⁵ Boucher, *Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, pp. 345-351; Greenville *Mountaineer*, July 12, 1834.

sion of moral perjury," he said. When the people of Greenville assembled for the purpose on September 27, Perry addressed them and was on the resolutions committee that denounced the oath as "proscriptive in its nature, and at war with the fundamental principles of our Government," but resolved to await the close of the next legislative session before determining what course to pursue.²⁶

The Unionists of the state watched Perry's campaign with intense interest. As the returns came in on election day, the Nullifiers were alarmed to learn that the Unionists had gained decidedly, not only in their stronghold of Greenville, but also in Nullifier Anderson. But the result in Pickens brought joy to Calhoun's followers, for the Unionists had suffered a heavy loss.²⁷ One of Perry's friends wrote him significantly: "Grisham could now be said to be the strongest man etc. etc.—I write you, you know in confidence and as a friend—God forbid that I should judge anybody wrongfully but it is strange business." Reports to Perry from friends in both Anderson and Pickens indicated that he had lost heavily among "ignorant, pious persons" because of the duel, though it was condemned by men who would have pronounced his character "blasted" if he had acted otherwise. "'Twas them *cursed presbyterians* the *Humphys*," wrote an indignant friend.²⁸

The three divisions of the congressional district showed the following result:

	Perry	Davis
Greenville	1509	419
Pickens	688	776
Anderson	658	1730
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2855	2925

²⁶ Perry Pamphlets (Alabama State Department of Archives and History), XVI; Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 27, October 4, 1834.

²⁷ J. R. Poinsett to Perry, September 25, October 17, 1834, Perry Papers; T. N. Dawkins to *idem*, September 19, 1834, *ibid.*; Edmund Webb to *idem*, October 22, 1834, *ibid.*; Greenville *Mountaineer*, November 1, 1834.

²⁸ Edmund Webb to Perry, October 22, 1834, Perry Papers; George Reese, Jr. to *idem*, October 17, 1834, *ibid.*

As Editor Wells pointed out in the *Mountaineer*, the Union party gained 79 votes over the last congressional election in Greenville, and 97 in Anderson; the Nullifiers lost 31 in the two districts. On the other hand, 183 fewer votes were cast in Pickens than in the last election; the Unionists lost 208, and the Nullifiers gained 25. Wells said in conclusion: "It is manifest from these statements, that there is a majority of Union men in this Congressional District, and that we have been defeated by the negligence of our party in turning out in Pickens to vote."²⁹

Perry wrote philosophically of his defeat:

This nomination has proven an unfortunate one—It displeased Col. G and his friends—the Union party of Pickens were lukewarm and did not turn out & I have consequently been beaten seventy votes in pretty near six thousand. . . .

Although defeated I do not know that it will be of any disadvantage to me. It is no doubt to my interest to attend to my profession during the Fall Circuit. My business has increased. I am doing well. If I had been elected to Congress I should have had to abandon my profession.³⁰

III

When the newly elected legislature met in December, the Nullifiers, taking advantage of their two-thirds majority and disregarding the voice of the people, proceeded to push through confirmation of the test oath. The Unionists held a caucus to consider some stringent mode of resistance. But finally moderate leaders arranged a compromise, by which an explanatory clause was added to the oath, stating that it imposed no obligation on a citizen inconsistent with his obligation "to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."³¹

The Greenville legislative delegation had brought with them the protest against passage of the oath signed by 1428

²⁹ November 1, 1834.

³⁰ Journal, I, October 26, 1834.

³¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 20, 27, 1834; John H. Harrison to Charles W. D'Oyley, November 29, 1834, Perry Papers; James R. Erwin to Perry, December 17, 1834, *ibid.*; Carson, *James Louis Petigru*, p. 171.

citizens of Greenville and 545 from Pendleton. But they acquiesced in the compromise, writing an address to their constituents giving their reasons. The people in Greenville, however, considered the agreement a victory for the Nullifiers; to the sturdy mountaineer patriots it seemed an abandonment of principle.³² Several weeks earlier, Wells had turned over the editorship of the *Mountaineer* to William L. Yancey, who, he announced, was much better qualified than himself "to ride upon the whirlwind of strife, which seems to be gathering over our country." The youthful Yancey, denouncing the compromise, now poured forth editorials for liberty and the Union with as much ardor as he devoted to secession in Alabama in later years.³³

Perry's reaction to the compromise was the same as that of his Greenville constituency. He felt that it would have been far better if the Union party had quietly accepted the oath with their own interpretation, rather than committed themselves to an agreement which the Nullifiers now claimed as victory. The Unionists should never have made a compromise that did not first define *allegiance*—the main point of issue between the two parties. Since the Nullifiers had always claimed that *indivisible* allegiance to the state was consistent with the United States Constitution, where was there any concession to the Unionists in the wording of the compromise? Now a man who believed that he owed allegiance both to South Carolina and the Federal Government could not conscientiously take the oath, for the Nullifiers had branded it with their interpretation. With stern determination Perry wrote in his Journal:

Such being the construction I do not see how any Union man can take the oath. In my opinion the "Compromise" is an abandonment of principle & a sacrifice of honor. The matter ought to be referred to the Judicial Tribunals of our country. Untill this is done it shall never polute my lips.

³² Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 13, 1834; Handbill, "To the People of Greenville," signed by Banister Stone, Wilson Cobb, Micajah Berry, John H. Harrison, February 7, 1835; Journal, 1, January 6, 1835.

³³ Greenville *Mountaineer*, November 15, 1834—May 16, 1835.

Having, against his judgment, acceded to the will of the party in joining issue over the test oath the preceding spring, he now felt that the Unionists had acted shamefully in agreeing to the oath while the Nullifiers insisted on their meaning of it—"a meaning we did say was tantamount to *perjury*. But I am disgusted with parties. They are constantly shifting their grounds and taking new courses. There is no certainty in their movements."³⁴

It was as a party rebel, then, that he delivered a stirring address against the compromise at the anniversary of the Battle of Cowpens in Spartanburg District a few weeks later. On a sunshiny day in January, standing on the battleground, surrounded by thousands of sturdy up-country men, many of them Revolutionary soldiers,³⁵ he described vividly the battle of fifty-three years before and paid glowing tribute to its heroes. Then he called upon the assembled throng to return to the patriotic faith of their noble forefathers—to "that holy and devout reverence for the Union" which until recently all had cherished. But how sadly had times changed! The General Government was now openly "*reviled, denounced, and despised,*" and by "*wild, absurd, and disorganizing heresies*" attempts were being made to confine patriotism within the narrow limits of a single state. An oath was being required "made avowedly to teach us—yea, *swear* us that our *first* and *highest* duty is to South Carolina. This principle established, the Sovereignty of the State must follow, and a rapid stride has been made towards the dissolution of the Union." The compromise did not touch the true point at issue—the *nature of allegiance*. Let them be ever vigilant of their liberties, for the "Spirit of Disunion" was still abroad:

In conclusion, I would exhort you, fellow-citizens, in the name of Your Country, in the *name* of Liberty, and in the *name* of Almighty God, to look to this Sacred Union—reared by the wisdom and cemented with the blood of your fathers—as the Bulwark of your Freedom—as the Palladium of your Liberty—and as the *very*

³⁴ I, December 16, 1834.

³⁵ Greenville *Mountaineer*. January 24, 1835; Journal, I, January 27, 1835.

existence of your National Independence and your Prosperity and Happiness as a People. Let your last and dying words be those of the venerable sage and patriot of Quincy—"The Union—Liberty—And Independence—One And Inseparable—Now And Forever."³⁶

IV

On January 29 Warren Davis, broken by a dissipated life, died in Washington. Thus the Greenville-Pendleton congressional district faced the necessity of another election. When he heard the news, Perry wrote in his Journal:

It is more than likely that I shall be again brought into the field and again beaten. I care not for the one nor much for the other. . . . A great many Union men left Greenville this winter. It is doubtful whether this district votes as strong [as] it did last Fall.³⁷

Soon afterwards he attended court at Anderson and Pickens, where it seemed the general impression among the Unionists that he would run again. About the middle of March, Waddy Thompson was announced as the nominee of the Nullifiers, and in the *Mountaineer* of March 28 Perry was proposed as the candidate of the Unionists. Perry had already written Grisham and received a discouraging reply, ending, however, with the grudging concession: "If you desire another race the way is clear so far as I am concerned." Perry knew that the contest would be doubtful. Added to the disaffection of the Pickens group was the fact that many Unionists had emigrated since the last election and others had drifted into the fold of the victorious Nullifiers.³⁸

Early in April, as he was driving alone from Laurens to Edgefield court, Perry suffered a severe accident which crippled him for six months and rendered any active part in the campaign impossible. At Lodi, four or five miles above Cam-

³⁶ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 65-83; *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 14, 1835; Perry Pamphlets, X, XIV, XXIII, XLI.

³⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 103; *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 14, 1835; Journal, I, February 8, 1835.

³⁸ Journal, I, March 13, 1835; Autobiography, 1849, p. 103; *Greenville Mountaineer*, March 28, April 18, 1835; Joseph Grisham to Perry, March 21, 1835, Perry Papers.

bridge, his horse became frightened and ran away, breaking the footboard and one of the shafts. When Perry saw the other shaft splitting, he leaped from the sulky. As he fell to the ground, the horse kicked him on the right leg, while his left leg struck the wheel of the sulky. He felt no pain until he tried to rise. Then he found his right leg broken in two places just below the knee, and the shattered bones protruding an inch through the flesh. A boot-maker with a wooden leg was the first to come to his rescue; Perry thought it a bad omen. Others arrived and carried him to a little house beside the road which belonged to a Mr. Davis. Here Colonel Goode of Pendleton set the leg, giving Perry a half pint of whiskey before the ordeal. Dr. Griffin from Cambridge was called, but did not consider it necessary to reset the leg. Though very feverish for several days, Perry felt little pain. He remained in bed at the home of these kind country people for several weeks. Friends from Greenville, who were daily passing in their wagons on their way to the market in Augusta, called to see him.

When the leg became inflamed again at the end of the fourth week, Perry sent for his friend Dr. Cook, who took him back to Greenville in a carriage. Crook found that it would be necessary to operate. Perry bore the pain stoically for two hours while the shattered bones were being cut from the wound. Thereafter, his leg gradually began to heal, but he was confined to his bed for three or four months and did not discard his crutches until he started to Edgefield court six months later.³⁹

Meanwhile Waddy Thompson was actively campaigning and making serious inroads in Pickens as well as Anderson districts. "Thompson is a smoothe hand to electioneer," wrote a friend from Anderson Court House to Perry. In his speeches he avoided party politics, recommended peace and harmony, and redeemed a promise to Perry that he would say nothing against him in the campaign. In his letters to newspapers and

³⁹ *Greenville Mountaineer*, April 11, 25, 1835; *Journal*, I, June 5, July 2, 1835; *Autobiography*, 1849, pp. 104-105; *Autobiography*, 1874, pp. 209-211.

to political meetings, Perry also adopted a policy of conciliation. He had become reconciled to the compromise, as the Unionists felt they could still retain their interpretation. It was evident to both parties that the people were utterly weary of the long controversy. On July 2 Perry wrote in his Journal: "I am happy to see party spirit dying away." Several Nullifier writers in the Pendleton *Messenger* attempted to draw him into a discussion, hoping to brand him as a Jackson and Van Buren man, which would have been anathema in South Carolina. But Perry answered that he had no interest in the presidential election.⁴⁰

The congressional election had been set for the first Monday and Tuesday in September instead of the regular second Monday and Tuesday in October. Perry saw in the change of date a deliberate arrangement between Governor McDuffie and Thompson for the latter's "convenience & interest." The election would immediately follow the encampment and reviews, which Thompson, as Brigadier-General, would attend and use for electioneering purposes. On the other hand, if the election were held at the usual time, it would be to Perry's advantage. Court would then be going on in Greenville, the Unionist stronghold of the congressional district. Perry remarked in his Journal: "It looks rather barefaced that the election should have been postponed so long & now ordered six weeks before the regular time."⁴¹

Perry attended the Pickensville encampment and felt gratified that the people seemed very glad to see him. "There is something pleasant in the affections of the mob," he wrote. But when he saw Governor McDuffie acting as drill sergeant to a squad, he was more than ever convinced that the leading Nullifiers were plotting dissolution of the Union and establishment of a Southern confederacy. That was their purpose in reorganizing the militia, he declared.⁴²

But the most alarming evidence of a deep-laid scheme of

⁴⁰ Edmund Webb to Perry, July 9, 1835, Perry Papers; Journal, I, July 2, 1835; Greenville *Mountaineer*, July 11, August 1, 1835; Autobiography, 1849, p. 101.

⁴¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, August 1, 1835; Journal, I, August 4, 1835.

⁴² Journal, I, August 14, 18, 1835.

the disunionists, in his opinion, was their attack upon the abolitionists during the campaign. The Nullifiers were making capital of Southern indignation over the transmission of abolition literature through the mails. Extending a conciliatory hand to the Unionists, they asked for joint action in putting down the abolitionists. Perry watched their exertions with great anxiety. "They are aware that Slavery is the only thing that can produce a dissolution of the Union. It is the only thing that will unite the whole South in opposition to the North," he observed. Though an ardent defender of slavery, feeling nothing but contempt for the abolitionists, he thought agitation would only play into the hands of the fanatics. "The course which the Southern people ought to pursue is one of profound silence on the subject of slavery," he said.⁴³

When the returns came in, Thompson carried the congressional district by a majority of 710. The vote showed a marked Unionist loss since 1834:

	1835		1834	
	Perry	Thompson	Perry	Davis
Greenville	1468	454	1509	419
Anderson	539	1878	658	1730
Pickens	517	902	688	776
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2524	3234	2855	2925 ⁴⁴

Perry was disgusted with the faithlessness of some of his party and with the triumph of Thompson's skilful electioneering methods over political principle in the contest. He recorded in his *Journal*: "The longer I live the more I shall find out about human nature. Integrity is a rare virtue. There are few men who can not be tampered with in some way or other." Disappointed by the decline in the Union party, he concluded that the people require "stirring & excitement" to keep up a party. He thought the Unionist leaders in Pickens

⁴³ Greenville *Mountaineer*, August 8, 1835; Miles N. Norton to Perry, September 10, 1835, Perry Papers; Autobiography, 1849, p. 36; *Journal*, I, August 8, 1835.

⁴⁴ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 12, 19, 1835.

had secretly aided Thompson. But after the first burst of indignation, he dismissed the election from his mind. "It is to my interest to remain at home & attend to my profession," he sanely observed.⁴⁵

Perry always had one consolation—his overwhelming popularity in Greenville District. In the 1834 election he had held nearly a four-to-one majority, and in 1835 had maintained decidedly more than a three-to-one majority. In the village itself he had received 402 votes, and Thompson 137.⁴⁶ He wrote a few weeks after the election:

I have often been surprised myself at the high estimation in which I was held by the people of Greenville & the devoted and endearing attachment of most of them. I am conscious of having done nothing to meritt such friendship, esteem and confidence. . . . But whilst I have gained the love of some, I have gained the ill-will of others without any known cause except it be a difference in politics.⁴⁷

Though the Union party kept steadily thinning in subsequent elections, Greenville District remained true to its patriotic faith. For twenty-five years longer, Perry, with his mountain constituency solidly behind him, was to wage a valiant fight against the dominant state rights party in South Carolina. There was no office or honor within their gift that the people of Greenville did not confer upon him for the asking. But he was proscribed so far as state or national honors were concerned, doomed by his firm adherence to principle to be the leader of a hopeless minority in South Carolina.

⁴⁵ Journal, I, September 10, 11, 14, 1835.

⁴⁶ Greenville *Mountaineer*, September 12, 1835.

⁴⁷ Journal, I, September 24, 1835.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Marriage and Domestic Felicity

AFTER HIS defeat in the congressional race, Perry turned with relief to his studies and the social contacts he had neglected for several years. Christmas found him at Rosemont, in Laurens District, enjoying the hospitality of his friend, Robert Cunningham, and the company of his talented daughter, Pamela. The preceding Christmas he had spent five or six days there and had written in his Journal: "The daughter is quite pretty very intelligent and exceedingly graceful and dignified in her manners. . . . I think her a most bewitching creature." In October, just after his long confinement with his fractured leg, he had stopped at Cunningham's for a day on his way to Edgefield court. Then he had written: "There are few young ladies who please my fancy so well—none."¹

In the heat of the nullification period Perry had become indifferent to feminine society, remarking in 1832: "I am now a single man and intend to remain so. I have but little confidence in woman. I know them too well already." Though he stopped once or twice to see Miriam Earle on his way to his old home, he practically discontinued his attentions to women for over a year. During 1835 and 1836 he was interested in Pamela and in Mary McLeod of Greenville, whom he considered equally beautiful and charming. Though not in love with either, he felt solitary, and time dragged heavily on his hands. Returning from a ball at the Mansion House one night, he wrote: "I begin to feel alone in the world. Every man ought to get married if possible. Man must have something

¹ 1, January 2, 1836, January 6, November 8, 1835.

to love & take care of—I now feel the want of the something.” In the fall of 1836 he purchased a lot on Main Street for \$1,000 to qualify for a seat in the legislature, for which he had consented to run at the solicitation of his Unionist friends.²

Thus the stage was perfectly set when he met Elizabeth Frances McCall of Charleston in September. She and her mother and sisters came to stay at the Mansion House, where Perry was now boarding. He met them soon after their arrival, and was immediately entranced with Elizabeth, the youngest, then seventeen. During the ensuing weeks he conducted a whirlwind courtship, and on November 7 wrote rapturously in his Journal:

Miss Elizabeth F. McCall . . . has made a conquest of my heart & affections. If ever man loved sincerely & disinterestedly I do—I have been in love before, often before—but I never loved with the same purity & devotion of heart. . . . My love now is as pure as the object of it—and never was human nature more artless, more innocent than it is in Miss Elizabeth.

. . . I was at length introduced—walked with her to the Falls—and I loved her—I felt that she was the softest sweetest & most amiable of her sex—I loved her—The more & better I became acquainted with her the stronger became my love. I attended two or three parties & rode with her to Piney Mountain on horse back—I soon found that my love must be told—I persuaded myself that she loved also—I told my love returning from Church. Encouragement was given me & I am now engaged. We have exchanged mutual pledges of love—And I hope that our love will be eternal.³

When Elizabeth returned to Charleston early in November, Perry hired a barouche and rode with her as far as Neely's Ferry on his way to Laurens court. He was soon to take his seat in the legislature, to which he had been elected without

² *Ibid.*, p. 37, entries for July 24, 1832, February 11, 1833, January 2, 20, February 17, 28, March 9, May 6, September 30, 1836; Thomas P. Brockman to Perry, January 25, 1836, Perry Papers; John B. O'Neill to *idem*, May 13, 1836, *ibid.*

³ 1, September 30, November 7, 1836; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 167-169.

opposition in October.⁴ But he had no thoughts now for politics:

I am not in condition to make much figure in the Legislature—My thoughts are too much engrossed by love & Elizabeth—I am to go down to Charleston immediately after the Legislature adjourns—and I expect to be married in the Spring—Untill that period arrives it will be a long very [long] time to me—I wish it was tomorrow.⁵

Perry was devastatingly in love at last. To Elizabeth he wrote:

I have felt, from our first acquaintance, a consciousness that we were intended for each other's happiness. I never before saw any one whom I thought so well calculated to make me happy. I never before saw one for whose happiness I was so willing and so ready to make any and every sacrifice.

Again, he ardently wrote: "Never before did I see one in whose manners, person, mind and accomplishments I could find no fault." He could not keep his mind on the legislative proceedings or become interested in the gaiety of the capital. "You are to me the world," he wrote, "and its society without you is dull and insipid."⁶

When the legislature adjourned late in December, Perry hastened to Charleston. After registering at the Carolina Coffee House and having tea, he sought the home of the McCalls on Legaré Street. Mrs. McCall was the widowed sister of Robert Y. Hayne; her husband, Hext McCall, had been a brilliant young lawyer of Charleston, a graduate of Yale, and a partner of Hayne's. Perry spent two blissful weeks in the company of his beloved, "indulging in the luxury of loving and being loved." Returning to Greenville, he eagerly awaited the wedding, set for the latter part of April. Before he went

⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 169-170; *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 15, 1836; Hext McCall Perry (ed.), *Letters of My Father to My Mother, Beginning With Those Written During Their Engagement, with Extracts from His Journal . . .* (Philadelphia, 1889), p. 5. (Cited hereinafter as Perry, *Letters to Wife* [First Series].)

⁵ Journal, I, November 7, 1836.

⁶ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 8, 11, 15, 17.

to the legislature, he had arranged for building a house on his lot, which was situated on the east side of Main Street, in the block between Court and Broad streets. The work progressed slowly, but Perry busied himself in planting trees, laying out a garden, and erecting a fence. He wrote frequently to "Lizzy," as he now called her, and eagerly read each of her letters a dozen times.⁷

A day or two after their marriage at Lizzy's home on April 27, the bride and groom returned to the Mansion House in Greenville, which was to be their home until the house was completed. On the evening of their arrival they were given "a very handsome" ball by the young men of the town. Afterwards many people called, and Perry paid more formal visits in two weeks than in the preceding ten years.⁸ To his delight, however, he found that his wife was not exceedingly fond of parties. He entertained her during the honeymoon chiefly by reading aloud to her several hours each day. He was supremely happy.⁹ On July 7 he wrote in his Journal a glowing description of his wife:

The following is now a candid description of my wife—it is not written with the blind zeal of a lover, but in the candour and frankness of my nature—She is near eighteen years old—of the ordinary height, & weighs about one hundred pounds—her person is slender & well proportioned—her figure good—She has light auburn hair—hazle eyes fair & most beautiful complexion—the bloom of perfect health always to be seen on her cheeks—Her features are of the Grecian cast—small & delicate—her forehead high & well turned—the nose, mouth & chin as beautiful as can well be imagined—There is a slight defect in the appearance of the upper eye lid & brow except when in conversation, which gives that part of the face rather a pensive look. The contour of the face is lovely

⁷ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 168, 170-171; Theodore D. Jervey, "The Hayne Family," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, V (January, 1904), pp. 170-171; Journal, I, January 10, February 25, March 16, 1837; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 13-14, 22, 29-30, 37, 40, 42, 49. The house stood opposite what is now City Hall; Perry's law office was on the corner of the same block—opposite the present Masonic Temple. (Information from old residents of Greenville.)

⁸ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 27, 44, 50-51; Journal, I, July 5, 1837; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 117-119; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 171-172.

⁹ Journal, I, July 5, 1837.



ELIZABETH MCCALL PERRY IN 1853
(From the portrait by William G. Brown)

& she would be regarded beautiful in any assembly of ladies—In her disposition she has softness and perfect amiability. There is no danger of unhappiness from that source. Her nature is kind & affectionate. She is remarkably particular & attentive to her dress—and always dresses with great neatness & simplicity—in her dress there is no effort at gawdy show & extravagance—Her hair is worn in curls & requires great particularity in keeping it properly done up. But on this subject she is too particular—more attention being paid to her hair than is necessary. This fault will be cured with age, as I believe all of her faults will be—Her mind is good & may be characterized by good sense and a quickness of perception—She has a retentive memory & recollects well all that she reads or that I read to her. Her mind has been pretty well cultivated, though she left school at too early a period—fourteen!—Her manners are pleasant & easy—In conversation she is modest & unassuming. And in the presence of many persons has but little to say. But in conversation with *one person* always lively & animated—Her voice is one of the sweetest & softest I ever heard—This expression is made too in honest candour—She sings & plays on the Guitar most charmingly—Though I have but little soul for music. I believe her turn of mind is inclined towards industry & activity—She has an active mind—a mind that must have employment—I said something above of her faults—If she has any—(and human nature is not perfect)—they are the faults of a girl of eighteen & will be corrected by age & experience.

Two days later he wrote a description of himself, which, it may be well to remember, was intended for no eye other than his own. It is a keen analysis of his personality:

I will now give an impartial likeness of myself—I am thirty one years old, six feet two inches & one half high, & weighing one hundred & sixty five pounds. My person is slender & erect—well proportioned & formed for health and activity—my features are prominent & manly—though not handsome—hazle eyes, long nose, high forehead, thin lips, & a good chin. My complexion is rather fair & wants colour though of a healthy appearance. I usually wear whiskers, which always becomes a long face like mine. In my manners I am plain & unstudied. There is nothing affected in my appearance—no one scorns so much as I do anything approaching towards affectation—and no one admires more than I do the sim-

plicity of nature, modesty and unassuming manners. In company I am generally pleasant & talkative. When interested I flatter myself that I converse pretty well. The characteristics of my mind are good sense & a sober prudent judgement. My memory is not very retentive—Whilst at school I learnt very fast & could memorize with great rapidity, but I soon forgot what I had thus quickly committed to memory. I have very little imagination & not the least turn for poetry or music. But I am a great admirer of Milton, Shakespeare, Byron, Scott & Moore—Homer & Virgil. I have read those immortal Poets with intense interest and admiration. I have from the time I was fifteen years old been a very hard student & few persons have read more within the last fifteen years than myself—My reading has extended to every branch of literature & science. The great fault is that my reading has been without method. History, Biography, & natural Philosophy are my favourite Studies—especial[ly] the two first—

By nature I am passionate & high tempered—but I have throughout life endeavoured to curb my disposition. I am quick in my resentments & equally quick in forgetting & forgiving an injury—Little things very often irritate & provoke me more than they ought. I am peculiarly sensitive on most things & there is no one more tenacious of his rights & honor. In my feelings & affections I am warm hearted, generous & confiding. I think that I have always been, both in words, thoughts & deeds, liberal, kind & humane. I have a heart which loves with a prodigality approaching wildness.

In my morals I have nothing to reproach myself for—there are very few young men whose lives have been as blameless in this respect as my own. It has been a rule with me never to deviate from the strictest veracity in all things—From deception and flattery I have ever been free. Intoxication gambling & dissipation I have never known.¹⁰

The married life thus begun was one of uninterrupted happiness. To Perry, his wife was always perfect, and his chief concern was to relieve her of every care. To her, Perry was the noblest man that ever lived in South Carolina.¹¹ It

¹⁰ See also Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 145-146.

¹¹ Mrs. B. F. Perry, Extracts from Perry Journal (MSS in possession of Mrs. Sam Rice Baker), I, 6, May 1, 1888.

was a beautiful romance that never dimmed with the passing years. Twenty-two years later Perry transcribed the above passage in his Autobiography and observed that he had not been disappointed in his anticipation of a life of domestic bliss.¹² Fifty years later—after his death—his wife copied most of his Journal, and after recording his description of her, commented: "He loved me more and more." After his description of himself she wrote:

The foregoing description was I suppose correct at the time it was written, but not at all a flattering one. My husband as he advanced in years became stouter; & he improved into one of the *noblest* looking men ever lived. Even in Washington, where the finest looking men were assembled, he was pronounced the handsomest man in the city. His face was peculiarly intellectual, & indicative of the noblest traits of character. The opportunities afforded him, in political life, also brought into action the exalted qualities God had given him. His conscience led him to follow the example of Washington; who at the earliest period he had taken as his guide; & being in consequence a Union man, he displayed the greatest wisdom, moral courage & unselfish patriotism, than [that] any man in So. Ca. ever did. He had never an equal & never will have in South Carolina.¹³

II

In the spring of 1838 their home was finally completed, and Perry and his bride moved in. It was a two-story wooden house, with two rooms on each floor and a cellar beneath. There was a front porch upstairs as well as downstairs, into which opened double French windows from each room; the roof was square and painted green. The front door, with "lights above and around handsomely set in," led into a wide hall which extended through the center of the house. The kitchen was a separate building in the rear. Perry had planted a cedar hedge on both sides of the graveled walk from the front gate to the porch. Three large oaks shaded the front yard, while cedars had been planted in front and on both sides

¹² Autobiography, 1849, p. 119.

¹³ Mrs. B. F. Perry, Extracts from Perry Journal, 1888.

of the spacious lot. In the rear Perry had laid out a flower garden and a vegetable garden. Shrubs, mountain locusts, and fruit trees were scattered over the place.¹⁴

In this home Perry lived for more than thirty-five years. As his family increased, he made additions and improvements. Most of the furniture was bought from an expert cabinetmaker in Greenville, Mr. Harley, at a cost of \$700, and was not only elegant, but of great durability. Other furnishings were purchased in Charleston. Perry now rejoiced in domestic pursuits, which became the center of his interest for several years. He wrote enthusiastically: "The greatest pleasure of life is to be improving & fitting up a house, garden & lot in handsome style, in company with a lovely & loving wife who takes an interest in these matters." He rose at five in the morning, walked to the stables to see his cows, hogs, and horse fed, looked at the garden, and returned to the house to read until breakfast at seven. If Lizzy were not busy, he read aloud to her. Then he went to his office (which was on the corner near his home) and attended to his professional duties, generally coming home once or twice before midday dinner. In the afternoons he returned to his office, and in the evenings either wrote or read aloud to Lizzy.¹⁵

So pleased was he with agriculture that in the spring of 1844 he purchased about eighty-one acres of farm land and woodland; it would be profitable, he thought, for obtaining firewood and raising grain. Six months later he purchased 120 adjoining acres. He found it refreshing after a day in the office to ride out and attend to the planting or harvesting of crops. On Sundays, and often during the week, he took his wife and children along. He was interested in raising thor-

¹⁴ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 14, 41, 42, 49.

¹⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 171-172; Autobiography, 1849, pp. 127-128; Journal, I, September 15, 24, 1837, January 31, February 10, 1838; Journal, II, March 12, 1839, May 30, 1841, February 29, 1844, August 11, 1849, February 4, March 3, 1850. Perry had built a "very handsome" law office at a cost of \$350 in the spring of 1834, and had slept there until his marriage. He was occupying the same office in 1849 (Journal, I, April 20, 1834, April 16, 1837; Autobiography, 1849, p. 102).

oughbred Berkshire pigs, and evidently was successful, for he advertised them for sale.¹⁶

Housekeeping and farming demanded servants, and Perry bought slaves from time to time till in 1849 he owned twelve or thirteen.¹⁷ They seem to have caused him much annoyance. "Servants are hard to manage and give me most of my trouble," he observed in 1842. "They become impudent and idle—Too often they are a great pest. We have to keep too many—I dislike whipping them & yet we cannot get on without it—" Occasionally they became so indolent that he sold them. "It is very disagreeable to be trafficking & selling slaves," he said. "But it is better than to be tormented by them all ones life."¹⁸ He tried, however, to make the best of the system of labor that was riveted upon the South. While away from home at circuit court he wrote his wife:

I hope you and the children are all well and that you have had no trouble with the servants. It is better to pass over their idleness and impudence than to always keep yourself in "hot water" by trying to make them do as they ought to. They are poor, ignorant, lazy creatures, who have very little motive or inducement to do well. We must make great allowance for them. We must do this for our own peace and comfort. If we make a fuss and get into a passion every time they do wrong, our lives will be continued scenes of unhappiness.¹⁹

He treated them kindly, and became very attached to those who served him faithfully. Though finally compelled to sell Sheriff because he had broken into the post office and stolen money, he wrote in his Journal: "*Rogue* as he was it cost me a flood of tears to break the tie which had bound him to me." Again, when he visited a former slave who was mortally ill

¹⁶ Journal, I, March 9, 1844, September 7, 30, 1845, February 9, 1846, March 3, September 18, 1850; *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 21, 1842.

¹⁷ Journal, II, April 23, July 13, 1839, February 18, 1842, February 29, 1844, September 14, 30, 1845, November 12, 1852; Mrs. B. F. Perry (ed.), *Letters of Gov. Benjamin Franklin Perry to His Wife*, Second Series (Greenville, S. C., 1890), pp. 23-25 (hereinafter cited as *Letters to Wife* [Second Series]); Autobiography, 1849, p. 96.

¹⁸ Journal, II, March 6, September 18, 1842.

¹⁹ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 30.

with scrofula, he wrote: "I cried like a child when I saw her as it were on the brink of the grave."²⁰

III

On his family Perry showered all the love and attention that a warmhearted husband and father could give. By 1850 there were four children: William Hayne, born in 1839, Anna in 1841, Frank in 1843, and Fannie in 1847. Perry adored them, and often paused in his Journal to describe their accomplishments and express his bright hopes for their future. He delighted in taking them with him to the farm, or to the circus when it came to town. Feeling an intense pride in Willie, the eldest, who was a very studious and well-behaved child, he often took him to the courts of the Western circuit, and occasionally to the sessions of the legislature, or to visit relatives in Charleston while he was attending court. All the children were intelligent, vivacious, and affectionate, and Perry was foolishly fond of them.²¹ He wrote his wife from Philadelphia in 1846: "You must take good care of yourself and children. Do not whip them. I believe it is best to let them be unrestrained than to be punishing. All children are bad and unruly."²²

Whenever away, Perry wrote home by every mail, and if he did not hear from his wife, was distressed. Often he walked to the post office in the pouring rain or left the court room to get a letter as soon as the stage came in, and occasionally he persuaded the postmaster to break the rules and give him a letter on Sunday. During the legislative sessions in Columbia, one of his most important missions was selecting presents to take home to his family. He would search the shops to find some toy, book, or piece of jewelry that he thought would delight them. Though he enjoyed his friends

²⁰ Journal, II, April 23, 1839, August 6, 1849.

²¹ *Ibid.*, June 16, 1839, March 28, October 3, 1841, February 18, July 24, October 2, 9, 1842, July 16, 1843, February 9, June 28, 1846, August 1, 11, 1847, February 4, 13, April 28, September 18, October 10, 1850; Autobiography, 1874, p. 174; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 138-143; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 62.

²² *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 102.



GROUP OF PERRY'S CHILDREN

WILLIAM HAYNE

FRANK

ANNA

FANNIE

of the bar and legislature immensely, he was always impatient for the time when he could return home.²³ In 1843 he wrote: "What a pleasure to return to ones wife and children—It is like returning to ones self—I have need to be happy with my wife & children. There is no fault to find with them."²⁴

But Perry never forgot his family on the Tugaloo. "There is always a pleasure in visiting the spot of my birth and the residence of my parents which I never experience in going elsewhere," he observed. He saw his mother and father as often as he could. "Never were parents kinder to a son than mine have ever been to me," he wrote in 1835. Of his younger brother, Josiah, he remarked: "He is like a fine piece of marble in a rough & unpolished state. How it would have delighted me if he had been educated." While at the legislature in 1842, he was informed of his father's death and burial, and was deeply affected. His mother, who had continued living at the old home with the servants, died in 1846, and Josiah in 1848.²⁵ Perry wrote loving obituaries for them in the Greenville *Mountaineer*, and on the tombs which he erected in the family graveyard in 1850 inscribed epitaphs giving careful information on their lives and character.²⁶

Perry often found time to visit his uncle Robert Foster. "I am under too many obligations to Uncle Robert ever to slight him—If I were to do so it would be base ingratitude—All that I am I owe to his early kindness & assistance," he wrote. After his marriage he extended his family circle to include Lizzy's mother and two sisters, and took great pleasure in advising them in their business and showing them every kindness that he could. Mrs. McCall felt that he was a real son to her. She

²³ *Ibid.*, *passim*; *Letters to Wife* (First Series), *passim*; Journal, II, February 18, 1842.

²⁴ Journal, II, March 5, 1843.

²⁵ Journal, I, August 2, 1832, April 6, 1833, January 27, October 10, 1835, April 9, August 18, 1836; Journal, II, August 4, 1839, March 6, 1841, June 26, July 24, 1842, March 5, August 20, 1843, September 30, 1845, June 28, 1846, February 14, 1847, January 14, 1849; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 59, 126.

²⁶ Journal, II, March 5, 1843, January 14, 1849, September 15, November 3, 1850; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 23, 1842, September 25, 1846. (Visit of author to graveyard on August 28, 1941.)

and her daughters, Anne and Susan, spent several summers with Perry and Lizzy, and built a home in Greenville in 1841.²⁷

IV

The period from 1835 to 1850 was one of comparative repose in Perry's life. From the frequent entries in his Journal and the numerous letters to his wife one may gain a clear-cut picture of his appearance and personality. His form had filled out to better proportions, his weight now being 192 or 193. He was wearing spectacles by 1838, dressed conservatively in black (at least in the legislature), and was considered by casual acquaintances to have a "grave look and dignified air and manner." Youths were impressed with his "splendid appearance and oratory," and with "his noble and dignified bearing."²⁸ In 1847, after writing of Lizzie's youthful appearance, he observed in his Journal: "In regard to myself I am pretty well for forty one—enjoy good health & well satisfied with my appearance. I have altered very little since I was married—though I do not feel quite so young."²⁹

A casual reader of Perry's letters may accuse him of conceit, for he shows himself well pleased with his accomplishments and the compliments that he received. But this is naïveté rather than egotism, for he frequently criticizes himself.³⁰ In his Journal he never attributes to himself brilliance or abilities out of the ordinary. At the age of thirty-four he wrote:

I have by dint of hard study & a correct life attained my present situation—which although far from being distinguished or beyond wont, is nevertheless much superior to any thing I could once have expected. . . . I must have some native talent or I should never

²⁷ Journal, I, October 1, 1837, July 19, 1838, August 4, 1839; Autobiography, 1874, p. 173; A. P. Hayne to Perry, November 5, 14, 1839, Perry Papers; S. B. McCall to *idem*, n.d., *ibid.*; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 90, 98, 103, 106, 109-110, 116.

²⁸ Journal, II, August 20, 1843; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 90; *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 82, 115; *Letters Acknowledging Receipt of Perry's "Letters to His Wife,"* pp. 52, 68.

²⁹ II, August 11, 1847.

³⁰ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 71, 82, 85, 97, 120; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 47, 50-51, 76-77, 119, 121, 125-127.



PERRY IN 1853
(From the portrait by William G. Brown)

have thought of breaking through the circumstances by which I was surrounded. . . .

To a weak mind or a very young person an humble origin may be a source of shame or mortification. It can not be to one who possesses good sense & experience & feels conscious of his own merit . . . [he] rises above those feelings & may take to himself more pride from it—as it adds additional luster to his fame.

A year later, when his law practice was increasing rapidly, he modestly observed: "I have been surprised at my own success." Reflecting on his continued progress two years later, he wrote: "I have done well—my success shows what good conduct & common abilities will do for a poor fellow setting out in the world."³¹

Yet Perry always showed a buoyant self-confidence and placed implicit trust in his own judgment. At the age of thirty-one he wrote: "The characteristics of my mind are good sense & a sober prudent judgement."³² Believing firmly in his decisions, he was ready always to press indomitably to their execution. This explains his unwavering independence in the face of overwhelming odds. Even in his ardent devotion to his wife, he did not yield his opinion. It is true that she exerted great influence over him. He wrote to her in 1846: "Your sweetness and womanly softness have too often made my sternness and inflexibility of purpose yield to your own wishes, to doubt your influence over me. I was not born to obey, and yet you almost always make me yield to your feelings and wishes."³³ Yet, in other letters, his old independence shines out clearly. He wrote from Columbia:

My Dear Liz:—I have been to church this morning like a good Christian, as I hope one day to be, and will now spend the evening in writing to you, like a good husband, as I hope you will grant me already to be. I am a good husband in all things, except that I will not sometimes yield my opinion to yours; but even in this you afterwards admit me to be right, and like a good wife (which

³¹ II, June 7, 1839, May 9, 1840, June 26, 1842.

³² Journal, I, July 9, 1837.

³³ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 90.

I will vow you to be before any earthly tribunal), acknowledge yourself to be wrong.³⁴

Adherence to principle was his cardinal creed. Never would he depart from his convictions to obtain popularity. One day in Greenville a blind itinerant beggar with three little boys came up to Perry and a group of men who were standing on the street. Though the others contributed fifty cents apiece, Perry did not give a cent. Later he wrote:

I acted on principle & it required some boldness so to act. I subjected myself to the censure of being esteemed *niggardly*—& uncharitable. . . . I never have withheld my mite where I believed the object deserved it—But I never will give where I think it would be encouraging *vagabondizing*.

He would not attend the races in Greenville because of principle. "They shall not receive my countenance or support," he wrote. "I consider them demoralizing & ruinous to the district. . . . They bring together a set of black guards who taint & corrupt the very negroes in the streets." When he heard the year after his marriage that he might be defeated for the legislature, as some of the people of Greenville thought him too favorable to the low country since his marriage there, and some disapproved of his votes on certain questions, his old independence flared up. "For many years I was the most popular man in Greenville," he wrote. "This popularity came on me without any effort of my own, without being sought for & I shall make no exertions to retain it. It came & it may go."³⁵

But there were contradictory traits in Perry's character and personality. During his engagement he had written: "No, Lizzy, if there be a fault in my nature—and I know I have many—it is that I am too sensitive, too ardent and too impetuous in my feelings and disposition. I have frequently thought that I was the creature of feeling alone."³⁶ It seems strange that one so adamant in his opinions displayed such

³⁴ *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 135.

³⁵ *Journal*, I, June 24, 1836, June 27, 1838; *Journal*, II, September 5, 1842.

³⁶ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 11.

simple warmth, tenderness, and sympathy in all his human relationships. He was very much like his mother, of whom he wrote: "There never lived a human being with more of the milk of human kindness in her bosom." When he visited his friends or relatives who were in sorrow or suffering, a wave of sympathy overpowered him, and he generally burst into tears. A letter from his wife telling of his little son's remembering him made tears of joy roll down his cheeks. When, soon afterwards, the child was ill, he wrote in his Journal: "It almost breaks my heart to see the dear little creature suffering. I sat by him this morning whilst lying on the sofa, & cried like a child to see the langour & weakness of his countenance."³⁷

Generosity, as well as warmth, characterized his nature. In 1846 he wrote to his wife: "It gives me great pleasure, my dear wife, to gratify your every wish, when I can do so. My happiness in life is to make others happy, and the greatest to make my wife and children happy. I live for them."³⁸ His was a simple nature—affectionate, genial, kind, and confiding; there was no concealment or deception in him.³⁹ Writing of Chancellor Harper, he observed: "If there be anything in the character of men which I admire above everything else, it is simplicity and frankness of character; they constitute what I term purity of character."⁴⁰ These are the attributes of Perry's own character. However impetuous and high-tempered, he had a forgiving disposition. In the years following the nullification controversy, he numbered Waddy Thompson and George F. Townes among his best friends.⁴¹ Thompson, writing a biographical sketch of him in 1853, opined: "His nature is frank, confiding, generous, impulsive and quick—more quick to forgive and forget than to take offence."⁴² Perry

³⁷ Journal, I, July 24, 1835; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 98-99, 109; Journal, II, August 6, 1843, September 5, 1841.

³⁸ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 124.

³⁹ *Letters Acknowledging Receipt of Perry's "Letters to His Wife,"* pp. 88-89.

⁴⁰ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 135.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 60, 84, 98, 111; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 11, 26, 35; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 161, 224.

⁴² Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living*, II, 596.

wrote in his Autobiography in 1849: "If I know my own heart there is not at this time a human being on the earth towards whom I have an ill will or unkind feelings." Referring to the heated comments he had made in his Journal in former years, he declared: "I have too often made them under excited feelings, & now feel that I was wrong in doing so, & that I have often done injustice to the motives & actions of others."⁴³ Magnanimity was one of his greatest attributes.

V

Since his youth Perry had often pondered on religion, but he did not find in the churches around him a creed that satisfied his longings. Until his marriage he generally attended the Baptist Church, as he had done in his childhood, but the principles of the Methodist had a stronger appeal. "They are more liberal & more rational & less of pride & ostentation," he declared. "True religion consists in humility, sincerity & plainness." In his reflections, Perry reveals a pious nature and an abiding faith in God. With the heritage of generations of Puritans behind him, religion was a part of his being. Indeed, in his rejection of outward form and ceremony, his strict morality, his obedience to the inner voice of conscience, and his hopefulness for a spiritual experience, he was like the Puritans of old. He wrote in his Journal in 1833:

My religious notions are not so orthodox as I could wish them—I do indeed wish to be a Christian, and a firm believer in the Scriptures. I have always kept my religious belief to myself—I pray to God in the sincerity of my heart to change my feelings & principles.

Expressing the same wish four months later, he concluded: "But *faith* is not the gift of man, but of God."⁴⁴

Perry had nothing in common, however, with the austerity and intolerance that had crept into New England Puritanism. His was the democratic, freedom-loving religion of those first

⁴³ Pp. 55, 96.

⁴⁴ I, p. 36, March 9, June 14, 1836, February 11, June 24, 1833; II, September 18, 1842.

staunch souls who had sought the shores of America. As he observed the sects around him, he could find no congeniality in them, since theology was becoming more and more predominant in the religious denominations of the South. He wrote in 1836: "I believe that generally religious persons are less liberal, less kind, less social, more sordid & more selfish than others—In being abstracted from the world they are also abstracted from many virtues."⁴⁵

Perry was no student of theology, but he was an open-minded thinker and read widely in historical, religious, and philosophical works. He responded readily to all liberal ideas. Undoubtedly he was interested in the new religious movements of both Old England and New England. Though there is no evidence of his alignment with the Unitarians and transcendentalists (for he makes no mention of them in his writings), yet these reformers, seeking a renaissance of the old humanitarian principles of the Puritans, embody his ideals. William Ellery Channing, the great Unitarian divine of Boston, had emphasized the ethical note in his definition of religion as "the adoration of goodness." In 1842 Perry stated much the same idea in his *Journal*: "In my opinion true religion consists in *doing good*." His religion, like Channing's, was tolerant, humanistic, and democratic. But in the warmth and generosity of his humanitarianism, Perry went farther than Channing; he may be more closely compared with the noted transcendentalist minister, Theodore Parker, who believed that the noblest religion was not supernatural, but natural, rising "spontaneously from the depths of life."⁴⁶ Perry wrote in 1849:

I think true religion consists in doing good to others & living virtuously ourselves. In going to church or saying our prayers we are rendering no service to our fellow-man except so far as our example may have a moral influence. It is true these exercises prepare the

⁴⁵ Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, II, pp. 271-273, 317-319; *Journal*, I, March 9, 1836.

⁴⁶ Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, II, pp. 321-338, 414-425; *Autobiography*, 1849, p. 32; *Journal*, II, March 6, 1841, September 18, 1842, March 5, 1843, May 26, June 6, September 18, 1850.

heart for its duties in life & therefore the necessity of performing them. They are not the object & end of religion, but the means by which we are prepared to be religious in doing good to others, relieving the distressed, assisting the poor, instructing the ignorant, correcting the vicious etc.⁴⁷

Like Parker, Perry was warmly responsive to the calls of social justice, and early enlisted in various movements for reform. He had the Puritan background, the rock-bed of character and conscience, that was fertile soil for such altruistic impulses.

Though opposed to the dogmas of religious denominations, Perry kept his views to himself, and after his marriage attended Christ Episcopal Church regularly with his wife, who was a devout member. He considered it the duty of every good citizen to support church services, for their moral influence, if for nothing else. We may readily understand why he never joined. "I am no hypocrite in manners, morals or religion," he wrote, "and cannot pretend to, what I have not." But he also thought it the duty of all parents to bring up their children under Christian influence; and he therefore readily consented to his wife's suggestion that they read aloud a chapter in the Bible and have family prayers each night.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Autobiography, 1849, p. 97.

⁴⁸ Autobiography, 1874, p. 179; Journal, I, February 11, 1833, February 7, 1836; Autobiography, 1849, p. 97.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Citizen of Greenville, 1835-1850

IN THE peaceful interval between the nullification conflict and the secession movement of 1850, Greenville grew and prospered, both as a resort and an industrial town. In 1831 it was incorporated, and by 1850 the population had risen to about fifteen hundred. In summer the stream of visitors from the low country constantly increased; many purchased homes in the vicinity; others found comfortable accommodations in the hotels. The Mansion House continued to be popular. In 1836 another brick tavern, the "Planters' Hotel," was erected by David Long on the southeast corner of Main and Washington streets. Rowland's Hotel was also well known, as was the "Kentucky and Tennessee Inn" next to Long's.¹

The town still bore a rambling aspect, with the business streets extending from the river up a steep red hill to Coffee Street. Beyond North Street on the west side of Main Street was an open space known as "Sandy Flat," where the country people swapped horses and got drunk on sales day. North of this, on both sides of Main Street (where College Street intersects Main today) stood a large grove of century-old oaks, in the shade of which grazed the cows of the town.²

Though rural in appearance, Greenville was losing its backwoods characteristics and becoming more refined. Under the influence of the cultured summer visitors, the inhabitants

¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, January 15, May 14, December 24, 1831, February 25, 1832, May 16, June 20, 1835, March 12, June 11, July 2, 1836, May 5, 1843, July 17, 1846, June 18, 1847, August 30, 1850, March 7, 1851; C. A. David, "Greenville of Old," No. 3, David Scrap Book.

² David, "Greenville of Old," Nos. 3, 5, 50, 54, 56, David Scrap Book.

abandoned many of their rustic ways. No longer did they idle away their time playing cards in front of the stores; no longer was drunkenness looked upon with leniency. But with the rudeness of the frontier departed also some of its easy hospitality. Society was now organized in smaller groups and had become more formal. Merchants went North for their goods, and tailors advertised the latest styles. A jockey club was formed, and horse races became fashionable events each fall. Those of a more literary turn joined the "Thespian Society," which gave amateur plays at the "Greenville Theatre," or the "Lyceum," which arranged for lectures or debates at stated intervals.³

Besides its tourist trade, Greenville District still depended largely on raising corn to sell to the Kentucky and Tennessee drovers as they passed on their way to market; by the latter 1840's, however, wheat and oats were grown in fairly large quantities. In 1835 a valuable new industry was brought to the town when Mr. Eben Gower and Mr. Thomas Cox erected a coach factory on the west bank of Reedy River, which became famous for the quality of its wagons, buggies, and carriages. The district by 1850 boasted one or two iron forges, four or five cotton factories, and two paper mills.⁴

II

Perry entered with zest into the business, social, and cultural life of the mountain town. Business, which had declined during the years of party conflict, began to revive. Perry acquired a larger and larger law practice. His income of \$1,500 rose to \$2,800 in 1837, the year of his marriage, and averaged \$3,000 thereafter. Inventories in his Journal show that he was a good financial manager. By 1843 he was out of debt and

³ Journal, I, 37; Autobiography, 1849, p. 76; Journal, II, October 1, 1843, March 3, 1844; *Greenville Mountaineer*, April 25, 1835, March 12, June 18, 1836, August 3, 10, 1838, October 2, 1840, May 5, October 20, 1843, February 2, 16, March 8, 1844, March 7, 1845.

⁴ *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 25, 1832, May 2, 1845, February 27, 1846, June 25, 1847.

owned \$17,420 worth of property, which had been augmented to \$31,840 by 1850.⁵

He continued an assiduous student, purchasing a large law library and reading it voraciously. From every trip to Columbia he returned home loaded with books. He prepared his cases thoroughly and kept a carefully indexed notebook in which he recorded a statement of the case, evidence, defense, and law involved, with citations of authorities.⁶ Having "speaking talent of a high order," he was very successful in court, and gained a reputation second to none on the Western circuit, being employed in most of the important civil and criminal cases. Waddy Thompson asserts that he "well deserved and established his title to be ranked with the first lawyers of the state—able, learned, eloquent, firm and just."⁷

In 1842 Perry declined a renomination for the legislature, writing: "I have quit politics and shall devote myself exclusively to my Profession—I wish to increase my Law Library & build up a reputation for myself in the way of my profession. I am too poor to establish one in politics or I should prefer that road." A year and a half later he recorded: "My practice is increasing all round the circuit. I hope & believe that my reputation is also."⁸ Perry collaborated with the ablest lawyers on the circuit. For convenience in attending to his extensive practice, he at times formed copartnerships with lawyers in other towns—for instance, with S. L. Austell, of Spartanburg, and J. P. Reed, of Anderson.⁹ His reputation spread

⁵ Journal, I, November 12, 19, 1835, February 17, June 22, August 18, 24, 1836; Autobiography, 1849, p. 34; Journal, II, March 12, 1839, December 25, 1843, February 29, 1844, February 22, 1846, January 10, 1847, January 17, 1850.

⁶ Journal, II, January 10, May 16, 1841, February 18, March 13, 1842, February 29, 1844, February 9, 1846; Lawyers' Case Books, 1841-1845, 1845-1847, Perry Papers.

⁷ Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living*, II, 585.

⁸ Journal, II, June 26, 1842, December 25, 1843.

⁹ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 89; Armistead Burt to Perry, September 19, 1842, Perry Papers; Thomas C. Perrin to *idem*, September 28, 1843, *ibid.*; Petigru to *idem*, August 31, 1836, August 11, 1837, December 10, 1840, August 24, 1842, March 28, 1843, April 25, 1843, *ibid.*; F. W. Pickens to *idem*, September 13, 1839, *ibid.*; J. N. Whitner to *idem*, May 18, 1839, *ibid.*; *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 26, 1836, January 20, 1843; *Anderson Gazette*, February 7, 1845.

beyond the circuit, and his services were sought in important cases as far away as Sumter.¹⁰

Perry enjoyed once again the pleasant sociability on the circuit which he had missed during the years of nullification, when he had been opposed politically to nearly all his fellow-lawyers. Many were his interesting conversations with friends of the bar as they rode from one courthouse to another. Often he rode with Judge Earle, Waddy Thompson, or G. F. Townes; sometimes he joined Henry C. Young, of Laurens, Armistead Burt, of Abbeville, or James Edward Henry, of Spartanburg. They generally stopped at a roadside spring for lunch, to which Mrs. Perry contributed her delicious gingerbread and pound cake. A glass of wine or brandy added sociability to the party. As they journeyed to Columbia to the Court of Appeals, they were often joined by Simeon Fair, O'Neill, and Chancellor Job Johnston, of Newberry. In Columbia they generally stayed at the same hotel and had a pleasant time. Perry always saw much of Huger when he was there.¹¹

Of the law cases in which Perry was engaged during this period, by far the most sensational was the trial of William L. Yancey in 1838 for the alleged murder of his wife's uncle, Dr. Robinson M. Earle. Perry, Burt, and David L. Wardlaw were lawyers for the defense, and Young and Henry for the prosecution. The affair involved one of the most prominent families in Greenville, and late in life Perry observed that it was the most painful criminal case he had ever had. Yancey had read law in his office and had engaged his affection. "He was a most cordial warm hearted & joyous young man of the most promising talents," wrote Perry.¹²

Yancey had attended a militia muster near Greenville at which Waddy Thompson and Joseph N. Whitner, of Ander-

¹⁰ J. D. Ashmore to Perry, March 13, 1843, Perry Papers.

¹¹ Journal, I, 8; Autobiography, 1849, p. 33; Journal, II, May 19, 1839, June 25, 1840, May 16, 1841, February 18, 1842, May 15, 1842, November 21, 1849, April 28, May 19, June 23, 1850; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 73, 84, 108-109, 111-112, 114, 127; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 13, 42, 84.

¹² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 93-94.

son, congressional candidates, spoke. In conversing with a group of men, he made a remark about Thompson that was immediately resented by Thompson's nephew, Elias Earle, a youth of seventeen, who called him a liar. Yancey slapped the lad, and Elias returned the blow with his riding whip. Next day Yancey went to Elias's father, Dr. Earle, told him the circumstances, and expressed his deep regret. He thought the affair was ended, but soon afterwards Dr. Earle started the quarrel anew on the porch of Crittenden's store, called Yancey a liar, and rushed at him with a stick. Firing a pistol as he was shoved off the porch, Yancey then shot and mortally wounded the doctor.¹³

Perry made a strong appeal for acquittal on the ground that the pistol was fired involuntarily, and thus the shooting was accidental. He prepared his argument with the utmost care and moved logically from one conclusion to another, first giving his own personal testimony to Yancey's high-minded, gentlemanly, and respectful character, and then describing his mild and honorable conduct after "the youthful indiscretion" of his remarks at the muster. Witnesses corroborated his statement that Yancey was in the habit of carrying arms and had drawn his pistol only after Earle's attack. The jury rendered a verdict of manslaughter, but Perry thought the testimony strong enough for acquittal. He has narrated the case in full in one of his case books.¹⁴

III

After his marriage Perry delighted in having congenial friends for dinner or tea, and his wife was a charming hostess. Many were the pleasant hours thus spent in the company of Judge Earle, Waddy Thompson, Poinsett, Petigru, O'Neill, and others. Poinsett and Perry had become friendly in the

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 94; J. W. DuBose, *Life and Times of William Lowndes Yancey* (Birmingham, 1892), pp. 73-74; *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 9, 1838.

¹⁴ *Lawyers' Case Book*, Perry Papers; *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 9, 1838. Yancey was sentenced to imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$1500. He had served only three months in jail, however, when Governor Patrick Noble, on petition of over one thousand respectable citizens, remitted the imprisonment and two thirds of the fine (DuBose, *William L. Yancey*, p. 75; *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 25, 1839).

days of nullification, and it was Perry who negotiated Poinsett's purchase of the Blassingame estate in 1834. Thereafter the two men and their wives became intimates. Poinsett, skilled in agriculture, made many progressive innovations on his farm which intensely interested Perry. Frequently the Perrys took dinner at "The Homestead," and the two men spent the afternoon inspecting the farm. Often Judge Earle entertained his friends at his country home, where Perry enjoyed mingling with visiting lawyers and judges. Waddy Thompson became one of Perry's dearest friends, for the animosities of nullification days had quickly vanished. Thompson, warmhearted and affable, was a most entertaining conversationalist. He and Perry could talk by the hour on politics. Sometimes Thompson's good friend, William C. Preston, was there on a visit, or Judge A. P. Butler, of Edgefield, of whom Perry was very fond. When Thompson was appointed minister to Mexico in 1842, he sent Perry a beautiful copy of Cicero's orations as a token of esteem. Upon his return the citizens of Greenville tendered him a magnificent dinner, at which Perry acted as master of ceremonies.¹⁵

A Charleston friend who came to Greenville occasionally was Richard Yeadon, the able editor of the Charleston *Courier*, 1833-1844, whose acquaintance Perry had made when they served in the legislature together. Yeadon, who was of a rather short and stout build, called Perry his "Tall Amicus." Perry says of him in his Autobiography: "I did really love the fellow with all his excentricities & uncouth appearance. He was high minded, generous, frank & noble." Perry was often entertained by Yeadon with lavish hospitality when he went to Charleston, and in turn gave dinners and teas for Yeadon

¹⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 161, 179, 189, 216, 224; Autobiography, 1849, p. 70; Journal, II, May 20, 1836, August 2, 15, 29, September 5, 1841, March 6, 13, October 2, 1842, May 7, 27, September 10, 24, 1843, August 11, September 29, 1849, July 24, 1852; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 11, 1851, November 11, 1852; Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 17, 1844; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 69, 113; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 21; J. R. Poinsett to Perry, September 25, October 17, 1834, August 11, 1841, Perry Papers; Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, pp. 203-205, 221-222.

in Greenville.¹⁶ Another Charlestonian whom he liked to see in Greenville was Judge Mitchell King; they would sit for hours discussing law and politics. Occasionally Rhett was in Greenville, or C. G. Memminger, on his way to his summer retreat at Flat Rock; they would always call for a long chat with Perry at his office. Especially glad was Perry to see Armistead Burt, who generally roomed with him at the hotel in Columbia during their many years together in the legislature. Perry writes that he was "a gentleman of polished manners, great wit, pleasant in conversation, and fine looking," and "the first lawyer in the upper country."¹⁷

IV

Amidst his busy life Perry always found time for literary pursuits. His mind was eager for knowledge in almost every field. He wrote in 1849:

I read every thing that came in my way, History, Novels, Poetry, Religion, Philosophy, etc. But I never had much taste for Poetry. I have read all the principal Poets, more as a matter of pride than of pleasure. Novel reading I am fond of, but always looked upon it as a waste of time, and therefore have never indulged in it to any great extent. . . . But History & Biography have constituted the greater portion of my reading. Natural Philosophy and Astronomy have likewise been most agreeable studies for me. . . . Too much of my time has always been spent in reading newspapers, Reviews & Periodicals, & by far too great a portion of it given up to politics & political wrangling.¹⁸

Entries in his Journal frequently mention the books that he has read—such as Scott's, Bulwer's, and Simms's novels, the works of Homer, Herodotus, and Juvenal, Life and Letters of

¹⁶ "Memoir of Richard Yeadon, Esq.," *American Whig Review*, XXVIII (May, 1850), 482-483; *Letters Acknowledging Perry's "Letters to His Wife,"* p. 59; Autobiography, 1874, p. 224; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), p. 308; Journal, II, July 6, 1845, October 19, 1847.

¹⁷ Journal, I, June 22, 1836; M. King to Perry, January 22, 1845, Perry Papers; R. Barnwell Smith to *idem*, July 12, October 3, 1836, *ibid.*; Journal, II, March 5, September 24, 1843, July 6, 1845; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 102, 118, 95; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 13-14; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 179, 223.

¹⁸ Autobiography, 1849, p. 32.

Robert Burns, Letters of Horace Walpole, Thiers's *French Revolution*, Humboldt's *Cosmos* and *Aspects of Nature*, More's *Utopia*, Bacon's *The New Atlantis*, Lytell's *Travels in North America*, Pepys's *Diary*, Bancroft's *History of the United States*, and numerous other histories and biographies. In 1841 he took fifty dollars worth of newspapers and reviews a year, among which were the *Charleston Courier*, *Columbia Carolinian*, *London Quarterly*, *Edinburgh Review*, *Foreign Quarterly*, *Westminster Review*, *North American Review*, and *Blackwood's Magazine*.¹⁹

Perry's one great extravagance was purchasing books; he simply could not resist them. He remarks in his Autobiography: "My passion was to purchase books & read them." When in Columbia or Charleston he always visited the bookstores and never came out empty-handed. In 1842 he went to an auction sale of Thomas Cooper's library and spent more than \$200 for books. A few months later he ordered \$300 worth of law books from Philadelphia. He took great pride in his collection, writing: "My Library is a fine one—the best out of Charleston." While attending the Court of Appeals in Charleston in 1845, he purchased \$450 worth of books. He then valued his collection at \$4,000. "I have the best Library in the upper country," he again wrote. "And it is a great source of pleasure & profit."²⁰ But when he succumbed to the temptation of buying \$315 worth of law books in Charleston the following December, he evidently felt a qualm of conscience, for he wrote to his wife:

I have also sent a large box of books, law books, which I could not well do without. I have paid for them in part by an order on a client in Charleston. The balance I pay next winter. . . . I know you will be surprised, but they are books I have long wanted and could not do well without. All that I have, and all that I ever expect to make, have been and will be the product of books. My books have been profitable and therefore I must enrich my Library.

¹⁹ Journal, II, March 6, 1841, *passim*.

²⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 84; Journal, II, February 18, July 24, August 21, 1842, July 6, 1845; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 75-76, 98, 102, 121; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 54.

I will pay for the balance, \$215, in some fees which I shall make pretty easily. Take good care of them and don't let the box get wet before you put it in the house.

Her reply enabled him to write with relief: "Your letter did not scold me as much as I expected about the purchase of books."²¹

In 1849 he remodeled his house, making a library room out of the porch downstairs and adding another bedroom upstairs.²² He was prouder than ever of his library:

My present Law Library alone cost me \$3000 & my miscellaneous Library \$3000 more. I have eight hundred volumes of law books well selected & most of them new. I have seventeen hundred volumes in my miscellaneous Library, containing most of the standard works of the ages, and I am increasing the number of my books every year,—I might almost say every month. . . . Some of my law books have been printed upwards of two hundred years & are in good condition. I think I have the best law library in South Carolina out of the city of Charleston. My books were purchased, a great many of them, at auction & hence my library has cost me very little in proportion to its real value.²³

Even as a boy Perry had had a proclivity for writing. While editor of the *Mountaineer* he had had an opportunity of discoursing on literary as well as political topics. He was fond of reviewing the latest novels, biographies, books of travel, and periodicals.²⁴

During the heat of the nullification period, when the atmosphere was too tense for social enjoyment, he had started a diary—"The Life and Journal of B. F. Perry," he called it—chiefly as a means of relaxation.²⁵ At irregular intervals, beginning July 24, 1832, he continued it until 1863, sometimes writing every few days, again only every few months, and occasionally allowing a lapse of a year, or even two. The Journal is

²¹ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 72, 76.

²² Journal, II, August 6, 1849.

²³ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 26-27.

²⁴ Greenville *Mountaineer*, 1829-1833, *passim*.

²⁵ Autobiography, 1849, p. 95.

an outspoken portrayal of his thoughts of the moment. In the preface he states:

This book is not intended for the inspection of any one. My object in commencing it is to afford occupation for leisure time, and to treasure up events which may be useful in after life. . . . In a word it shall be a record of my life, my actions, my opinions and the feelings of my heart. . . . It is my solemn determination that no one whatever, not even my most intimate friend, shall see this Book.

One wonders, however, as the diary continues, if he did not have some idea that it might later be used, along with his other records, to vindicate his long-continued opposition to the ruling dogmas of the state. He probably had a similar purpose in so carefully preserving his letters and other papers, and in writing two autobiographies. In 1849, when having two volumes of his letters bound, he records that he was doing so "in order to preserve them for our children & descendants."²⁶ In the same year he wrote an Autobiography of about 150 pages affectionately dedicated to his eldest son. In the preface he asserts:

It is not my purpose for this Manuscript ever to be printed or made public or go out of my immediate Family & their descendants. . . . This manuscript will in some measure be a history of my own times, my own feelings, hopes & fears—In it my children will see the difficulties with which I have had to contend in life & the care & interest with which I have watched over their childhood.

The Journal which I commenced keeping early in life is too minute & records too many frivolous things to be seen by anyone but myself—It is likewise most hurriedly written & sometimes under great excitement & would now do great injustice to many persons whose characters I esteem & appreciate & others whose friendship I greatly value—I hope to be able to hold a more prudent [course] in this work & make judicious selections.²⁷

The Autobiography gives a full account of his life to 1849,

²⁶ Journal, I, 1-2; Journal, II, August 19, 1849.

²⁷ Autobiography, 1874, p. 1.

and is especially valuable for the years prior to 1832, which are treated in bare outline in his Journal.

Fond of history, Perry collected a great deal of lore on the up country and published a series of "Revolutionary Incidents" in the *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 22, 1834—August 22, 1835. There were twenty-six articles in all, most of them based on first-hand information from old residents of Spartanburg, York, Greenville, and Pendleton districts. They told of Indian raids and massacres, such as those of the Hite and Hampton families; of the heroism of frontiersmen in their log forts; of skirmishes between the Whigs and Tories; of notorious Tory leaders and their atrocious deeds—matched sometimes by those of avenging Whigs; of distinguished Revolutionary soldiers and officers of the up country, such as Samuel Earle and William Butler; of the Battle of Cowpens as seen by a gallant officer. Written in simple and lively style, they were enthusiastically received by the public. Yancey, then editing the *Mountaineer*, reported that he had received many new subscriptions to be continued while the articles ran.²⁸

In the spring of 1842 Perry was solicited by P. C. Pendleton, proprietor of *The Magnolia or Southern Monthly*, to contribute a series of "Revolutionary Incidents." The magazine was to be removed to Charleston and its name changed to *The Magnolia or Southern Apalachian*. William Gilmore Simms, who had been its main contributor, was to be editor. He had met Perry in Columbia several years before and introduced him to Pendleton by letter.²⁹ Two of the "Revolutionary Incidents" already published appeared in the July issue of the magazine, three others in August, and four in September. The following year Perry continued the series with three new stories and two old ones. In the March, 1843, number he contributed an

²⁸ D. White to Perry, March 5, April 5, 9, 1835, Perry Papers; *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 22, 1834—August 22, 1835.

²⁹ Journal, II, May 15, 1842; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 84; *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 89; William P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms* (Boston and New York, 1892), p. 131; W. G. Simms to Perry, March 25, June 16, 1842, Perry Papers.

article on "Legal Antiquities," in which he reviewed ancient treatises on the English common law.³⁰

While Perry was contributing to the *Magnolia*, Simms came to Long's Hotel for a few days on his way to Flat Rock, North Carolina. Perry and he conversed for hours on the *Magnolia* and literature in general, strolling to the Falls and returning to Perry's home for champagne; and Simms told the plots for his next novels. Thus began a friendship that continued until Simms's death. When the novelist returned from Flat Rock in October, he again saw much of the Perrys; and from his home at "Woodlands" below Columbia, he sent them a cordial invitation to visit him.³¹

The *Magnolia* having been discontinued in the fall of 1843 because of financial straits, Simms sent Perry's "Revolutionary Incidents" to the *Orion*, another Southern magazine started in Georgia which came to Charleston to expire. The article appeared in the issue of the following January. A few years later Perry published two long articles in the *Southern Quarterly Review*, a magazine established in New Orleans in 1842, which had a precarious career in Charleston until Simms became editor in 1849. One article was a long and convincing argument in favor of giving the election of presidential electors to the people in South Carolina; the other, "The Revolutionary History of South Carolina," attempted to supply accounts of battles in the up country which had been ignored by tidewater historians. Simms wrote Perry from New York: "I have read with pleasure and satisfaction your two contributions to the Southern Quarterly. The paper on the Electors of the President, I regard as conclusive."³²

³⁰ "Revolutionary Incidents," *The Magnolia or Southern Apalachian*, New Series (Charleston, 1842-1843), I (July, 1842), 40-43, I (August, 1842), 99-102, I (September, 1842), 173-176, II (January, 1843), 30-40, II (February, 1843), 109-111, II (May, 1843), 326-327, II (June, 1843), 380-382, II (March, 1843), 145-152; Journal, II, September 4, 1842.

³¹ Journal, II, September 4, October 2, 1842; W. G. Simms to Perry, November 22, 1842, Perry Papers.

³² Trent, *William Gilmore Simms*, pp. 131-133, 163-167; W. G. Simms to Perry, May 26, October 13, 1843, May 20, 1847, February 5, 1849, Perry Papers; "The Bloody Scout: ■ Revolutionary Incident," *Orion*, III (January, 1844), 216-219;

Perry was very much interested in the cultural advancement of Greenville. He joined the Lyceum Society, which gave an interesting course of lectures and discussions in a hall of its own. After attending a lecture by Poinsett in 1843, he reported: "There was quite a select audience of the fashion & *literature* of Greenville!" He was also an enthusiastic trustee of the Greenville Male and Female Academies, always giving his services gladly to promote education. Because of his reputation as a public speaker, he was called upon by several colleges of the up country to deliver commencement addresses. One at Erskine College in 1844 was highly praised by the newspapers, and later printed in pamphlet form and widely distributed. In 1848 he was commencement speaker at Limestone Springs.³³

In 1846 the legislature elected him a member of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina College: a position of honor, for the Board was composed of the most distinguished men of the state. For many years he faithfully attended its sessions and worked tirelessly for the college, frequently championing its cause on the floors of the legislature. William C. Preston was president when he entered upon his duties, and Perry was in full accord with his plans of reform. He enjoyed his social contacts with Preston and the members of the board.³⁴

In the summer of 1846 he fulfilled a long-felt desire to become acquainted with other sections of the country by taking a tour of the North. First he visited Washington, where he was warmly received by Waddy Thompson, Armistead Burt, Yancey, and other friends in Congress. But he was greatly disappointed in the House. "They are, indeed, a most

"The Election of Electors of President and Vice-President of the United States," *Southern Quarterly Review* (New Orleans, Charleston, Columbia, 1842-1857), XI (April, 1847), 345-376, 468-485.

³³ Journal, II, October 1, 1843, July 6, 1845; *Greenville Mountaineer*, January 24, 1845, February 13, 1850; "Address delivered before the Literary Societies of Erskine College, Abbeville District, S. C., on the Fifth Anniversary, Sept. 18, 1844," *Perry Pamphlets*, XXVI; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 85-109; Thos. Curtis to Perry, May 15, 1848, Perry Papers.

³⁴ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 76-77, 83, 86, 122; *Greenville Mountaineer*, May 22, 1846; Journal, II, June 28, 1846, May 19, 1850.

inferior looking set of men," he wrote, "seem to have very little talent, and one-half of them look like they had no pretensions to be called gentlemen. I was more shocked at their rudeness and vulgarity than I was at their bad looks." He went with Thompson to the Senate and met several of his friends. Thomas Benton he considered "decidedly the most striking and imposing man" he saw. Calhoun greeted him cordially and had him to tea and dinner while in Washington. After he had listened to most of the noted orators of the Senate, including Webster, Perry wrote: "I liked Calhoun's style of speaking more than that of any other. I felt proud of him."

Later he and Thompson called on Webster and found him sitting on his porch in his shirt sleeves, looking "as plain as any old farmer or country magistrate." But Perry was delighted with his "simplicity and greatness." He had the opportunity also of meeting John Quincy Adams, who, he found, represented the district where his Perry ancestors had lived. He was so struck by Adams's resemblance to his own father that he could not refrain from shedding tears. Adams invited him to call and told him much about his family connections. Twice Perry attended functions at the White House, finding the President "not so prepossessing in his manners as his wife."

From Washington, accompanied by Simeon Fair and Frederic Nance of Newberry, he traveled to Philadelphia, thence to New York, Albany, Niagara Falls, and on to Montreal and Quebec, returning by way of Saratoga Springs, New Haven, and Boston. He visited all points of historical interest and called on distinguished men to whom he bore letters of introduction from Poinsett, Mrs. William Butler, or Mrs. McCall. He waited two days in Kinderhook to see Van Buren, but felt repaid. In New Haven, his wife's girlhood home, he called on friends of her family—Governor Edwards, President Day of Yale, and Professor Silliman, who were all most hospitable. He was shown Mrs. McCall's former home and other places of interest. At Boston he visited President Everett of Harvard.

As he traveled through the prosperous farming sections of the Northern states and the industrial cities of New England, Perry was more than ever impressed with the economic contrast between the North and the South. On his way home he visited several of the Virginia springs with Thompson. As he returned through the Southland to Greenville, he was distressed over the neglected appearance of the countryside.³⁵

V

He had long realized the economic problem of the South, and was among the few Carolinians who had progressive ideas as to its solution. He attempted to apply them both in Greenville and in the state at large. While Calhoun and his followers were propagating the doctrine that agriculture was the only industry and slavery the only system of labor for the South, Perry and other economic realists were urging it to emulate the North by diversifying its industry. They saw the opportunity afforded by its natural and human resources for the development of manufacturing.³⁶ As early as 1837 Perry envisaged a bright industrial future for the up country, and for Greenville in particular:

Greenville must become a manufacturing district—water-power, health, cheapness of labor and the mineral productions of our county will force us to become a manufacturing people. When this does happen, and it is already beginning, wealth must come to us from all parts. Investments of capital will be made in our cotton factories, iron manufacturing companies, etc., from the north, the lower country and the southwest.³⁷

A few months later he visited the Vaucluse cotton factory, at the very time when William Gregg, a retired silversmith

³⁵ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 91-114; *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 24—September 4, 1846. Perry's great-grandfather, Nathaniel Perry, had married Abigail Adams—of the same descent as John Quincy. His father's resemblance, therefore, was hereditary (Morse, *Genealogical Register and History of Sherborn and Holliston*, p. 3).

³⁶ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 1-2, 11-12, 15; *Greenville Mountaineer*, September 22, 1832; Harvey T. Cook, *The Life and Legacy of David Rogerson Williams* (New York, 1916), pp. 138-234; Broadus Mitchell, *William Gregg, Factory Master of the Old South* (Chapel Hill, 1928), pp. 15-32.

³⁷ Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 35-36.

and jeweler, was managing it to prove to his own satisfaction that cotton mills were profitable for the South. Perry was intensely interested; and the same year he visited the Saluda factory near Columbia. When Gregg came out with his series of "Essays on Domestic Industry" in the Charleston *Courier* in 1844, Perry found in them the same ideas as his own—ideas expressed not by a theorist but by an expert who had successfully applied them. He wrote enthusiastically to Gregg for permission to republish the articles in the *Mountaineer*. Gregg's thriving mill community at Graniteville soon gave an unanswerable reply to the charge that manufacturing was unprofitable in the South.³⁸

Perry was more directly concerned with agriculture, however, than with manufacturing. He saw the ruinous effects of the "miserable system" of cultivation prevailing in the South, and urged the study and practice of scientific methods. When editing the *Mountaineer*, he had often written editorials suggesting progressive methods of fertilization, diversification of crops, and raising of livestock. Largely at his instigation, an agricultural society was organized in the district in 1830. Though it failed after a few years, he was one of an interested group who met in 1841 to organize a new one. He urged an improved system of cultivation to secure better compensation for the farmer and prevent emigration; and in the first anniversary oration he made many specific recommendations of value. When the state society met in Greenville in 1844, he was very active in its proceedings. The following year the Pendleton Agricultural Society honored him with an invitation to deliver the address at its thirtieth anniversary meeting. Calhoun was present on the occasion and complimented him on the speech.³⁹

³⁸ Journal, I, August 5, 1837; Autobiography, 1849, p. 122; Mitchell, *William Gregg*, pp. 2-75; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 66; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 8, 1837; William Gregg to Perry, February 10, 1845, Perry Papers.

³⁹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, April 17, May 7, 14, 28, June 11, July 9, 16, 1830, April 9, August 13, September 10, 17, 1841; W. B. Seabrook to Perry, September 2, 1844, Perry Papers; Geo. Seaborn to *idem*, September 23, 25, 1845, *ibid.*; Journal, II, June 13, September 26, 1841, October 5, 1845; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), p. 43.

As part of his program for developing Greenville District, Perry was an ardent advocate of railroad expansion in the state. Agitation was begun by Charleston merchants and businessmen in the hope of restoring the prosperity of Charleston, which was lagging far behind its rival seaports on the Atlantic. By building railroads into the interior and adjacent states, they expected to attract a rich trade from these regions and make Charleston the "commercial emporium of the South." Completion of the Charleston-Hamburg line by the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company in 1833 was the first step in the enterprise. Perry was heartily in favor of the project and approved the loan of \$100,000 made by the state. He felt that the line would be extended into the upper part of South Carolina and enable the districts there to send the fruits of their industry to Charleston.⁴⁰

But the hopes of Charleston were not realized; it could not compete with Savannah, which transported the cotton more cheaply down the river from the markets at Augusta and Hamburg. Accordingly, a grandiose transmontane scheme was launched in 1835 to make Charleston the commercial outlet of the rich grain-growing, stock-raising region of the West. Initial action in the Louisville, Cincinnati & Charleston Railroad project was taken by Cincinnati, but Charleston citizens were its chief promoters. Robert Y. Hayne saw in the undertaking not only commercial advantages, but a means of cementing the political union of the South with the nonslaveholding states of the West; and he appealed to the whole state for support on these grounds.⁴¹

Perry entered enthusiastically into the enterprise. When the people of Greenville assembled in the courthouse to discuss it, he and Waddy Thompson spoke glowingly of the commercial advantages that would ensue from having trade from the West flowing through the state to Charleston. Especially

⁴⁰ Samuel M. Derrick, *Centennial History of South Carolina Railroad* (Columbia, 1930), pp. 1-20, 58-59, 76; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 405-406; Greenville *Mountainer*, December 19, 26, 1829.

⁴¹ Derrick, *South Carolina Railroad*, pp. 99-101, 116-138; Jervey, *Robert Y. Hayne*, pp. 385-388, 401-402.

would Greenville District and other up-country areas through which the railroad would pass be benefited. The Greenvillians adopted Perry's resolutions pledging support to the "magnificent project." Perry recorded in his Journal:

Many of the people seem to be in the spirit of the grand enterprise & I hope they will persevere every where. This project of a railroad may be the means of uniting political parties & giving a death blow to past differences & nullification—I pray to God it may.

He wrote the address that appeared in the next issue of the *Mountaineer* setting forth the advantages of the railroad.⁴²

After the Knoxville convention, in which nine states were represented, had officially launched the project, the campaign for individual and state subscriptions began. Largely through the activity of Hayne, who was elected president in 1837, and other enthusiastic Charlestonians, the requisite \$4,000,000 to secure the charter was obtained. But so vast was the undertaking that the company solicited the legislature for state aid and banking privileges, which were granted in the form of a \$1,000,000 subscription, a \$2,000,000 loan of the credit of the state, and a charter for the Southwestern Railway Bank. Perry served as one of the commissioners in Greenville to receive subscriptions, and he fought in the legislature for the state-aid bills. But by 1839 the financial condition of the company was deplorable. In 1840 the stockholders decided to limit the program to completing the road from Branchville to Columbia in South Carolina. Three years later the company was amalgamated with the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company to form the South Carolina Railroad Company. Perry and John T. Coleman continued to serve as commissioners in Greenville after the death of Hayne and aided in the new program.⁴³

⁴² Journal, I, November 12, 19, 1835; Greenville *Mountaineer*, November 21, 28, 1835; Autobiography, 1849, p. 106.

⁴³ Derrick, *South Carolina Railroad*, pp. 148-188; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 22, 1837, January 5, 1838; Robert Y. Hayne to Perry, October 12, 1837, March 20, April 10, October 8, 1838, Perry Papers; A. Blanding to Perry and J. T. Coleman, July 10, 1839, *ibid.*; printed circular of Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad Company, January 8, 1841, *ibid.*; Jervey, *Robert Y. Hayne*, pp. 389-395, 400-429, 441-460, 471-498, 505-514.

After the failure of the Cincinnati undertaking, Coleman conceived the idea that the citizens of Greenville should build a road of their own connecting with one of the termini of the South Carolina Railroad. He, Perry, and Poinsett met in Perry's office and made plans for launching the project. Soon Waddy Thompson became interested, and Simeon Fair, Perry's lawyer friend in Newberry, assured him that Newberry would back the movement. The promoters called a public meeting in Greenville on October 20, 1845, to which were invited all in South Carolina, Tennessee, and North Carolina who were interested in the road. A committee of thirty, including Poinsett, Perry, G. F. Townes, and Tandy Walker, was appointed to arouse public interest.⁴⁴

Principally through the efforts of Perry, the legislature granted a charter to the company in December, 1845, which was to expire at the end of a year unless \$300,000 of stock had been subscribed. Then began railroad meetings and conventions to arouse the public to take subscriptions. The logical route from Columbia to Greenville was along the ridge by way of Newberry and Laurens, a distance of 109 miles. Since all points en route would lie east of Saluda River, no heavy bridging or grading would be required. These three towns—Newberry, Laurens, and Greenville—were at first the most interested. At a preliminary convention in Laurens, Perry made a strong address presenting the benefits from the contemplated road. He was appointed chairman of a committee to report on the cost and income, and after collecting careful statistics, published a long report estimating for the stockholders a return of 16 per cent on their investment. But subscriptions were not sufficient by fall to validate the charter. A convention at Greenville decided to send a committee, composed of Poinsett, Perry, Thompson, and six others, to Charleston to press the matter on the citizens there and to have an

⁴⁴ *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 6, 1846, October 3, 24, 1845; Autobiography, 1874, p. 143; Perry, "Reminiscences of the County of Greenville," *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, September 27, 1871; Simeon Fair to Perry, October 4, 1845, Perry Papers.

address prepared for the people of the state. At the Charleston meeting the three men made a strong plea for the railroad, showing the increased trade that would flow into Charleston from the mountain region.⁴⁵

Renewal of the charter at the legislative session in December spurred the railway promoters to redouble their efforts. Perry was very active during the early months of 1847, making speeches and corresponding with friends in Laurens, Charleston, and Newberry. Poinsett supported the cause energetically in Charleston, and by May subscriptions there had reached \$72,600. Soon afterwards the town council in Columbia subscribed \$50,000. Since the requirements for the charter had been more than fulfilled, the stockholders organized at a meeting in Columbia on May 11; Perry drafted the bylaws for the company, and O'Neill was elected president. Location of the route was to be decided at a stockholders' meeting in the fall, where votes were to be taken by shares.⁴⁶

The summer witnessed an intensive campaign in the rival districts for increased subscriptions in order to control the route. Suddenly the three districts on the west side of the Saluda—Edgefield, Abbeville, and Anderson—which had previously kept aloof from the movement, conceived the idea of capturing the road. Excitement prevailed; railroad barbecues with speech-making, music, and pageantry were held in various towns in the districts. When the stockholders met at Newberry on November 19, Anderson and Abbeville, supported by Columbia and a majority of the Newberry stockholders, outvoted Greenville and Laurens and secured a circuitous route from Newberry westward across the Saluda

⁴⁵ Greenville *Mountaineer*, January 23, February 13, 27, August 7, September 25, December 4, 1846; Phillips, *Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt*, pp. 340-341; Drayton Nance to Perry, January 31, 1846, Perry Papers; Journal, II, January 9, 1847.

⁴⁶ Journal, II, January 8, February 12, March 5, April 16, August 1, 1847; J. H. Irby to Perry, January 10, 1847, Perry Papers; S. Fair to *idem*, February 23, 1847, *ibid.*; M. King to *idem*, January 19, 1847, *ibid.*; F. H. Elmore to *idem*, April 20, 1847, *ibid.*; C. G. Memminger to *idem*, September 28, 1847, *ibid.*; J. R. Poinsett to *idem*, November 6, 1846, April 7, 1847, *ibid.*; Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 14, 28, July 30, 1847.

River through Abbeville District to Anderson Court House. The distance from Columbia to Greenville by this route would be 158 miles as compared with 109 by Laurens. Perry, Thompson, and G. F. Townes, of Greenville, and J. H. Irby, of Laurens, vigorously opposed the resolution; but James L. Orr and J. P. Reed, of Anderson, as zealously upheld it. The Laurens and Greenville delegates then gave formal notice that their subscriptions would be withheld, and withdrew in a body from the convention.⁴⁷

At the spring meeting the Greenville stockholders applied for a refund of their installment and release from the company, but their application was rejected on the ground that their subscriptions were unconditional. They considered organizing an independent company to connect with the road which Laurens would build to Newberry, but after investigation decided that it would be more practical to unite with the Greenville and Columbia Railroad at Dr. Brown's, a point eight or ten miles south of Anderson. At a public meeting in Greenville, O'Neill, Perry, and Thompson spoke for the project. Once again Greenville became enthusiastic over the railroad. Old subscribers came forward with their pledges or increased them, and new subscribers were obtained. Vardry McBee generously raised his subscription from \$12,000 to \$50,000 to make up any deficiencies.⁴⁸

There was now only one obstacle to be overcome—gaining the consent of the other stockholders. When the convention assembled in Abbeville in October, the Anderson delegates opposed the proposition, as they wished Greenville to join the line at Anderson Court House. Connecting below them at Brown's would give Greenville much competitive business with Anderson. Perry was a delegate from Greenville. He thus describes the combustible atmosphere of the meeting:

The Convention met Friday night—There was a good deal of

⁴⁷ Phillips, *Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt*, p. 342; *Greenville Mountaineer*, August 20, 27, September 10, 17, November 26, 1847.

⁴⁸ *Greenville Mountaineer*, May 5, August 11, 1848, August 31, September 14, 21, 1849; *Journal*, II, September 29, 1849.

excitement—The Court House was full—Col Orr commenced by asking for the authority for the meeting of the Convention. To this Judge O'Neill replied very happily—Jake Reed let off a good deal of steam & ranted a great deal. Dr. Thomas & Reed became personal & were much excited. . . .

I made a speech of some length on Saturday night & tried to show to the Convention the importance of extending the road to Greenville—When I concluded I bid them Good Night & said they might do as they pleased, either extend the road or not—All that I desired was to be placed upon an equality with the other stockholders—If we were not, we would go to Laurens & carry with us all the Western trade and travel—I then put on my hat & left the convention.

The convention determined to extend the Road from Browns to Greenville. Anderson became pretty well reconciled.⁴⁹

Amicable feelings were fully restored when, at a railroad meeting in Greenville on November 6, J. P. Reed spoke for the enterprise. O'Neill congratulated the stockholders on their harmony and discussed the bright prospects of the company. By January the work was well under way for the Greenville branch. Perry had his railroad for Greenville at last and rejoiced that it came just in time, for already there was a slump in the tourist trade because the railroad in Georgia was attracting visitors to the springs and mountains there.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Journal, II, November 21, 1849.

⁵⁰ *Greenville Mountaineer*, November 9, 1849, January 25, 1850; Journal, II, September 15, 1850.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

State Politician

IN SPITE OF his resolve to quit politics after his bitter experiences during the nullification period, Perry's talents soon drew him back into the fray. In 1836 he was importuned by Petigru and other lowland Unionists, who wished reinforcement from the back country, to become a candidate for the legislature. Reluctantly consenting, he was elected without opposition. He worked hard and made a good impression, but he had not fully recovered from his disillusionment with politics. The following summer he wrote:

I would a[d]vise a young man setting out in life to keep clear of parties & all party strife & party politics--It is impossible for any one to be an *honest, independent* politician and belong to a political party. He must either sacrifice his own principles, or leave his party on many important measures.¹

Calhoun dominated the political scene in South Carolina until his death in 1850. Party politics, therefore, fluctuated according to his whims. Most of the Nullifiers, because of hostility to Jackson, had followed him out of the Democratic party; then, when he suddenly swung to the support of Van Buren on the Independent Treasury, they slavishly flocked back into the Democratic fold. Though his Whig colleagues, William C. Preston in the Senate and Waddy Thompson in the House, vigorously opposed him in Washington, the South Carolina legislature was at his beck and call. His dictates were manipulated through the Rhett-Elmore "clique," a com-

¹ John B. O'Neill to Perry, May 13, 1836, Perry Papers; Greenville *Mountaineer*, October 15, 1836; Journal, I, May 18, July 5, 1836, January 10, August 12, 1837.

bination headed by Rhett in Congress and by Franklin H. Elmore, congressman 1836-1838 and president of the powerful Bank of the State of South Carolina thereafter, and represented in the legislature by their brothers, Albert and James Rhett and B. T. Elmore. It was this group that effected a reconciliation between Nullifiers and Unionists in 1840 by conceding the election of a Unionist governor, John P. Richardson. Calhoun was consummating his scheme for unifying the state, and then the South, into a party for the protection and perpetuation of slavery. Intermingled with this purpose, though of secondary importance, was his ambition to become president.²

It was natural that the majority of Carolinians should become followers of Calhoun. Refusing to heed the progressive leaders who urged diversification of industry, they were becoming more and more wedded to a slave-plantation economy. Seeing the ever-increasing predominance of the Negro population, they were afraid that they would meet the tragic fate of their West Indian neighbors if emancipation were effected. The Vesey plot in Charleston in 1822 and the Nat Turner insurrection in Virginia in 1831 seemed lurid warnings of what might happen if abolitionists had their way. Consequently, they desperately sought means of preserving slavery. Calhoun was really the spokesman, rather than the leader, of the planter aristocracy.³

Since the Union party, as such, ceased to exist after it had thwarted the Nullifiers, Perry and other leaders were left the choice of supporting the Whigs or Democrats. Both parties carefully avoided the slavery question; therefore the decision rested on other significant issues. Since the Whigs, in general, were more nationalistic and aristocratic, they attracted most of the old Federalists—like Daniel E. Huger—and many of the

² L. A. Townes to G. F. Townes, May 6, 1838, Townes Papers; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 32-56; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 472-478; Meigs, *John Caldwell Calhoun*, II, 48-52, 61, 178, 188-201, 211-213, 263-264.

³ E. Merton Coulter (ed.), *The Course of the South to Secession: An Interpretation by Ulrich Bonnell Phillips* (New York and London, 1939), pp. 100-106; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 415-418, 496.

large planters, businessmen, and lawyers who approved of the bank, internal improvements, and tariff. Prominent among the latter group were Perry's Charleston friends, Petigru and Richard Yeadon. But Calhoun soon stamped out the Whigs with their nationalizing policies. After the election of 1844, in which they were denounced as the party of tariffism and abolitionism and polled only 6,000 votes to the Democrats' 52,000, they virtually ceased to exist.⁴

Perry may be termed an independent Democrat. Distinctly Southern in his views, he supported the party that leaned towards state rights and the equality of man. But he was not a follower of Calhoun—or of any man; often his views led him into flagrant opposition. In 1837 he joined the Whigs in the legislature to oppose the Independent Treasury, because he disapproved of any connection between the national government and fiscal institutions.⁵ Most of all, he deplored the agitation of the slavery question by Southern Democrats, and their schemes for expansion; for he saw only further economic ruin for the slaveholder in extending slavery to new territory. Thus he was opposed to the annexation of Texas when Calhoun was its ardent proponent. "Our Government or territory is sufficiently large already—without we wish a Southern Confederacy," he wrote.⁶

In the 1840 election, however, Perry was in complete accord with the Democratic party. Beneath the noncommittal "log cabin" platform of the Whigs, he saw the lurking danger of abolitionism, a national bank, internal improvements, and high tariffs. He was running for re-election to the South Carolina House, but campaigned entirely on national issues, stumping the district for Van Buren. Especially did he stress the support given Harrison by Federalists and abolitionists, and the danger that would befall Southern slaveholders if he were elected. He championed Van Buren as a state rights

⁴ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 476, 488; R. Yeadon to Perry, January 14, 1846, Perry Papers.

⁵ Greenville *Mountaineer*, July 17, 1840; Petigru to his daughter Jane, December 20, 1837, Allston-Pringle-Hill Collection.

⁶ Journal, I, August 8, 1835, May 14, 25, 1836, II, July 6, 1845.

man, opposed to congressional interference with slavery, a high protective tariff, internal improvements, and a national bank. His address to the voters of Greenville was republished by many Democratic papers in the state as the most convincing argument in the campaign. Thompson and Preston spoke at a Harrison dinner in Greenville to try to refute him; but at a meeting on sale day Perry replied "in a most masterly and triumphant manner."⁷

When, at the termination of the ten-year compromise, the Whig Congress raised the tariff in 1842, Calhoun found an issue that would draw Southerners to his side. He thought his chance for the presidency had come at last. The South Carolina legislature formally nominated him in December, and public meetings over the state endorsed him the following spring. Perry was on the resolutions committee for the Greenville meeting, which approved Calhoun as one especially qualified to carry out "those political principles to which the South generally, and the Democracy of the Union everywhere, are firmly attached." He was a delegate to the Democratic state convention, which unanimously endorsed the nomination.⁸

By 1847 Perry was seeing eye to eye with Calhoun on national issues. Threatened interference by Congress with slavery had aroused his Southern blood. The Wilmot Proviso, prohibiting slavery in all the territory to be acquired from Mexico, had passed the House and had failed in the Senate only because of inexpediency. In February Calhoun introduced resolutions declaring that Congress had no right to make any law prohibiting a citizen from emigrating with his property into any territory of the United States. In March, addressing a Charleston meeting, he urged the formation of a Southern party and the establishment of a newspaper at Washington to defend slavery against the aggressions of the North. He was enthusiastically received and found perfect

⁷ Journal, II, July 12, August 2, 11, 1840; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 97; *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 17, August 7, 14, September 4, 11, 1840.

⁸ Meigs, *John Caldwell Calhoun*, II, 246-249, 265-270; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 486-488; *Greenville Mountaineer*, May 5, June 2, 1843; Journal, II, May 7, 1843.

unanimity of sentiment among both Whigs and Democrats. Influential citizens pledged financial support for the paper and solicited subscriptions throughout the state.⁹

Perry was thoroughly in accord with the movement. On his way to Pickens court soon afterwards he called upon Calhoun:

I was delighted with him & Mrs. Calhoun & they both seemed pleased to see me—We commenced a conversation at nine oclock & did not rise till three to dinner! He was exceedingly interesting in regard to men & measures at Washington. . . . He thinks the Tariff settled forever & that we have nothing to fear on that subject—His greatest apprehensions are on the subject of abolition.¹⁰

In September Perry wrote Calhoun requesting him to prepare an address and resolutions on the Wilmot Proviso and the proposed Southern newspaper for a Greenville public meeting in October. He also asked permission to use his name in the presidential canvass:

I feel assured there never was a time, when your elevation to the Presidency, would have been of more service to the country, than it would be at present. I am therefore anxious that you should be placed in a position where it would be possible to unite on you. A movement to effect this might be made, during the next sitting of our Legislature in Columbia.

Though declining to draw the resolutions for lack of time, Calhoun advised:

If you would permit me to make any suggestions, as to the character of the report & resolutions, I would say, the more pointed and emphatick the better. I think, nothing ought to be said about compromise . . . the sooner the subject is met, & put an end to, the better for all. . . . We ought to *settle it now, & forever, & put an end to all future agitation*. It is in the power of the South to do so, if united.

⁹ Meigs, *John Caldwell Calhoun*, II, 395-403; Calhoun to Duff Green, March 9, 1847, in J. Franklin Jameson (ed.), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *American Historical Association Report*, 1899, II, 718-719; *idem* to Thomas G. Clemson, March 19, 1847, *ibid.*, 720; I. Hayne to Perry, n.d., Perry Papers; printed circular, March, 1847, *ibid.*

¹⁰ Journal, II, August 1, 1847.

As to the presidency, he answered: "I am perfectly passive. I do not desire the office, and would not accept it, but as a burthen, should it be offered to me."¹¹

At the Greenville meeting Perry formulated the resolutions, which were as emphatic as Calhoun had advised. The citizens pledged resistance "at all hazards and to the last extremity" to the Wilmot Proviso.¹²

II

In July, 1847, in the heyday of his friendship with Calhoun, Perry became a candidate again for Congress. He had never lost his ambition to make a name in the national legislature, and an issue of such vital import to the South had an especial appeal. He started his campaign in the fall of 1847 by speaking against the Wilmot Proviso in the principal towns of the congressional district, which now included Laurens as well as Pendleton and Greenville election districts.¹³

A month of so later James L. Orr came out against him. Since the Whigs did not name a candidate, the contest was largely to be one of personal popularity. Both were Democrats and anti-Wilmot Proviso men, and both active canvassers. Perry corresponded widely with his old Unionist friends, who reported that Orr, a younger and less experienced man, did not have as much prestige as Perry. The contestants met in debates at the fall and spring militia musters and at political gatherings.¹⁴

In May, 1848, Perry introduced an issue that received attention entirely disproportionate to its value. He attacked Orr's vote in the legislature in 1847 in favor of the Burnley and Johnson appropriation—a sum of \$8,200 to satisfy the debt of

¹¹ Perry to Calhoun, September 15, 1847, Perry Papers; Calhoun to Perry, September 20, 1847, *ibid.*

¹² Journal, II, October 19, 1847; *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 8, 1847.

¹³ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 23, 1842, July 16, October 29, November 5, 12, 26, 1847; Journal, II, March 6, 1842, May 7, 1843, October 19, 1847, February 8, 1848.

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1874, p. 143; Journal, II, October 19, 1847, February 8, May 18, 1848; Miles M. Norton to Perry, September 14, 1847, July 30, 1848, Perry Papers; A. F. Gowing to *idem*, May 12, 1848, *ibid.*; E. M. Keith to *idem*, February 15, June 1, 1848, *ibid.*

the sutlers of the Palmetto Regiment, Smith and Hill, for clothing and food purchased from A. T. Burnley and Johnson of New Orleans. Since the loan was endorsed by Colonel Pierce M. Butler, the proponents of the measure felt that the state was morally (though not legally) obligated to pay. Perry had vigorously opposed the appropriation on the ground that it was merely the private debt of the sutlers, who had collected the money in full from the soldiers and acted fraudulently. Testimony supported Perry's accusation. He published an article in the Laurensville *Herald* on the subject. Orr defended himself and retaliated by attacking Perry's record on several other legislative measures. Perry wrote a reply which his friends considered "just the thing."¹⁵

But the decisive issue that defeated Perry was the presidential election. He was unwilling to support any candidate not safe on the slavery question, and as late as February, 1848, was still hopeful of electing Calhoun. Thinking that Lewis Cass and Clay would be the party nominees, he suggested to his friend in Congress, Armistead Burt, that South Carolina vote for Calhoun and thus make an effort to throw the election into the House. Burt and other members of the South Carolina delegation, however, were convinced that there was no hope for Calhoun, and advocated that South Carolina remain aloof. Calhoun still hoped for the formation of a Southern party from the disaffected elements of the Whigs and Democrats, and influenced South Carolina not to participate in the Democratic national convention. When Cass was nominated, the South Carolina delegation considered his popular sovereignty even more dangerous than the Wilmot Proviso, and refused to support him. In general, the state favored Taylor, a Southerner and a slaveholder, until he became identified with what Rhett called the "consolidationist" platform of the Whigs.¹⁶

¹⁵ Journal, II, October 1, 1848; Perry to Major Godman, June 12, 1848, Perry Papers; *idem* to C. P. Sullivan, June 25, 1848, *ibid.*; E. M. Keith to Perry, June 1, July 24, 1848, *ibid.*; Miles M. Norton to *idem*, July 30, 1848, *ibid.*; Greenville *Mountaineer*, July 28, September 8, 15, 1848.

¹⁶ Perry to A. Burt, February 11, 1848, Perry Papers; A. Burt to Perry, Feb-

Rhett was the first South Carolina leader to swing to the support of Cass; for after the antislavery Democrats had joined the Free-Soilers, he considered the Democratic nominee much safer than the Whig. In July he anxiously wrote Perry that he had heard that Greenville District would support Taylor, and that it would be a calamity if the state voted for the Whig instead of the Democratic nominee. Perry theretofore had been noncommittal, though he had written that he would vote for Cass if no other candidate appeared. It is possible that he was heeding the warning of his friend, F. Burt, editor of the *Pendleton Messenger*, who had told him early in the campaign that many voters considered him too strongly attached to the Democratic party, and feared that, in case of separate action by the state, he would adhere to the party.¹⁷

At any rate, Orr brought the issue squarely to the fore when he announced himself for Taylor in July. It was a masterly stroke, for there were many Whigs in Pendleton and Laurens districts. Perry's friends warned him that if he aligned himself with Cass he would throw the solid Whig support to Orr. He replied that he would not dissemble his political views for a seat in Congress, that he regarded Taylor as wholly unfit for the presidency and the Whig party at the North as more hostile than the Democrats to the South, and therefore felt it his sacred duty to go for Cass. Thereupon he published an address to his constituents, which was republished in the press of the state and exerted great influence.¹⁸

The election resulted as Perry's friends had feared. The Democrats divided their votes, while the Whigs, with the exception of twenty or thirty of Perry's personal friends, voted solidly for Orr. Though Perry received 1,605 votes in Green-

ruary 22, July 30, 1848, *ibid.*; R. F. Simpson to *idem*, June 8, 1848, *ibid.*; Calhoun to Andrew P. Calhoun, April 16, 1848, in Jameson (ed.), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *loc. cit.*, p. 751.

¹⁷ White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 96-97; Perry to A. Burt, February 11, 1848, Perry Papers; R. B. Rhett to Perry, July 11, 1848, *ibid.*; R. F. Simpson to *idem*, August 1, 1848, *ibid.*; F. Burt to *idem*, October 1, 1848, *ibid.*

¹⁸ *Journal*, II, October 1, 1848; P. S. Vandiver to Perry, July 10, 1848, Perry Papers; Autobiography, 1874, p. 143; editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, June 3, 1852; *Greenville Mountaineer*, August 18, 1848; editorial, *ibid.*, June 3, 1852.

ville District to Orr's 423, he was defeated by 685 votes. Orr carried Pendleton by a vote of 2,884 to 1,099, and Laurens by 1,147 to 1,065. The *Mountaineer* asserted: "If the real Democrats of the Congressional District had made the politics of Messrs. Orr and Perry a test, as the Whigs did, Major Perry would, doubtless, have been elected by an immense majority."¹⁹

Again Perry's firm adherence to party had brought him defeat. He found some consolation, however, when the Democratic caucus of the legislature, in recognition of his services, chose him as one of the presidential electors at large.²⁰ As for his defeat, he wrote in his Journal:

My defeat was owing principally to the Presidential Election—The Whigs all united against me except *the gentlemen*. . . . The Democratic party were lukewarm in their support of Cass & were divided—

Another element of my defeat was the secret influence of Mr. Calhoun & his friends who supposed I would not wear his livery as tamely as Col. Orr—

There was a third cause which ought to be mentioned & that was *whisky* & a *potent* one it was—Col Orr treated to several hundred dollars worth of spirits & I did not treat at all—On the day of Election at Laurens, he opened a Grocery.²¹

III

With the exception of the term 1842-1844, when he retired from politics; 1848, when he ran for Congress; and 1860-1862, Perry served continuously in the state legislature from 1836 through the Civil War. He was never defeated, and nearly always headed the ticket. The year after he lost the congressional race, he was returned without opposition to the South Carolina House to fill a vacancy. He served four years in the Senate, 1844-1848, and the other years in the House.²² No other

¹⁹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 143; Greenville *Mountaineer*, October 13, 20, 27, 1848.

²⁰ G. F. Townes to Perry, November 6, 1848, Perry Papers; David Johnson to *idem*, November 7, 1848, *ibid.*; Greenville *Mountaineer*, November 10, 17, 1848.

²¹ II, December 24, 1848.

²² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 142, 144; Greenville *Mountaineer*, October 18, 1844, October 5, 12, 1849; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), p. 117; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 15.

member took a more active interest in the work of the General Assembly than Perry. He was also very attentive to his Greenville constituency, writing for the *Mountaineer* a full weekly account of the proceedings of the legislature, enlivened with personal anecdotes and descriptions of the capital.²³

Perry enjoyed the annual sessions. His social nature made him find it a great pleasure to mingle with friends in the legislative halls and hotels. Though typically up country in politics, he numbered many of the low-country members among his best friends. He was invited to many elegant entertainments in Columbia—dinners at the governor's, William C. Preston's, Colonel Taylor's, or Dr. Gibbes's, magnificent parties at Colonel Wade Hampton's, and gay commencement balls. The capital by 1850 was a town of considerable wealth and trade. It boasted a population of 6,000, steam water works, and a railroad. Brick buildings extended a half mile up Main Street, trees added to the beauty of the streets, handsome residences graced the suburbs. The State House, entirely remodeled, now had a "handsome front, parapet walls, and iron steps." In the fall and winter the streets were thronged with visitors attending the legislature, courts, or college festivities.²⁴

For nearly thirty years Perry fought manfully for democratic reform of the state government. But it was a hopeless battle, for the planter aristocracy, in secure control of the legislature by the unfair system of representation, had no intention of abdicating. Calhoun thwarted every effort at reform, for he was determined to suppress distracting movements within the state in order to keep it unified for leadership of the South. Minority rule by the low-country planters must be maintained in South Carolina if slavery were to be preserved in the South.²⁵

²³ Greenville *Mountaineer*, 1836-1850, *passim*.

²⁴ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 51-52; Autobiography, 1874, p. 127; Perry, *Letters to Wife* (First Series), pp. 69, 77, 86-87, 99, 102, 133; *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), pp. 16, 41, 43, 51-53, 68, 83, 86, 123-124; Journal, II, 1838, *passim*.

²⁵ Chauncey S. Boucher, "Sectionalism, Representation and the Electoral Question in Ante-Bellum South Carolina," *Washington University Studies*, IV, Part II (October, 1916), 13-16.

Perry, an ardent defender of slavery, was also a proponent of popular rights. As soon as he entered the legislature, he started his campaign for popular elections. The South Carolina legislature elected nearly all state officials, including the governor and presidential electors. Perry advocated popular choice of tax collectors and secured passage of the bill. The following session he pushed a bill for the popular election of presidential electors and governor. Little attention was given it, however, until 1844, when he took his seat in the Senate. He refuted the arguments of G. W. Dargan, of Darlington, and Francis W. Pickens, of Edgefield, that the people could not be trusted and that the measure would violate the compromise between the up country and the low. Such distrust of the people, he said, struck at the very foundation of self-government; the existing system enabled one fourth of the voters to choose the electors; and it was unconstitutional, as the Constitution provided that the "state" should elect them—and the legislature was not the state. His address was published widely, but the bill was defeated in both houses, several districts of the up country voting with the parishes against it. Calhoun's powerful opposition had much to do with the result.²⁶ In the session of 1846 Perry again debated the question with G. W. Dargan, but in spite of his impassioned defense of the bill, the Senate voted twenty-six to fifteen to drop it. In 1847 he renewed his efforts, and was ably assisted by J. A. Black, of Richland, and F. J. Moses, of Claremont. The bill passed the House by a majority of ten, but was lost in the Senate by a vote of twenty-three to seventeen. It was a distinctly sectional vote; the parishes and districts with large slavery interests defeated the bill.²⁷ The question was an im-

²⁶ Autobiography, 1849, p. 36; Autobiography, 1874, p. 146; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 24, 31, 1836, December 15, 1837, August 16, September 13, December 20, 1844, January 10, 1845; *South Carolina Senate Journal*, 1844, pp. 27, 72-73, 93; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1844, pp. 92-93; James A. Ashby to Perry, December 15, 1844, January 3, 1845, Perry Papers.

²⁷ *South Carolina Senate Journal*, 1846, p. 113, 1847, pp. 37, 88, 130; George W. Dargan to Perry, October 6, 1848, Perry Papers; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 10, 17, 24, 1847; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1847, pp. 145-151; Boucher, "Sectionalism, Representation, and the Electoral Question," *loc. cit.*, pp. 36, 38.

portant issue in the legislative race of 1848, and Perry's article from the *Southern Quarterly Review* on the subject was republished as a campaign document. "The election of Electors must be given to the people of South Carolina, as it has been given to the people of every other State in the Confederacy," he wrote. "The time has come when they must be placed on an equality with their fellow-citizens in other portions of the Union."²⁸



(Copied from William A. Schaper, *Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina*, with the kind permission of the American Historical Association)

Perry was aware that the unfair system of representation in South Carolina was the underlying cause of its conservatism. Since the amendment of the state constitution in 1808 there had been no change in the system of apportionment. Representation in the House was still based half on property and half on white population; in the Senate each district and parish continued to have one representative. As the up country increased more rapidly in wealth and population than the low

²⁸ *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 13, 20, 1848.

country, each ten-year apportionment increased its representation in the House, but the parishes still retained their control of the Senate. When editor of the *Mountaineer*, Perry had launched a campaign for reform. His purpose was twofold: to bolster the efforts of up-country representatives in the legislature to secure passage of a bill to divide Pendleton into two election districts (and thus give the up country another senator); and to scare low-country Nullifiers from voting for a convention lest it abolish parish representation.²⁹ He had written:

It is a singular fact, that the Constitution of South Carolina, is more aristocratic in its fundamental principles, than that of any other State in the Union. . . . The basis of representation in this State is as unwise and as anti-republican, as it is possible for it to be. In the House of Representatives it is founded on population and taxation. This in itself is unfair enough. The lives and personal liberties of men are certainly worth more than the property they may possess. . . .

The basis of representation in the Senate of this State, is founded on neither property nor population, but is entirely arbitrary, and in favor of the low country. There are several little Parishes in the lower part of this State, whose wealth and free white persons, only entitle them to one representative each, whilst they have as much influence in the Senate, as the District of Pendleton, whose property and population entitle her to seven members in the House of Representatives. Is this fair, just, politic or consistent with democratic principles? . . . Why are thirty or forty men in one part of the State entitled to as much weight in government as thirty-five hundred in another? . . .

The Parish representation in the Senate of this State is but little better than that of the rotten boroughs in England. . . .³⁰

On entering the legislature, he took up the fight for the division of Pendleton, but it was not secured until 1854. Low-country senators only laughed at the attempt to abolish the

²⁹ Boucher, "Sectionalism, Representation, and the Electoral Question," *loc. cit.*, pp. 4-6; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 26, 1829; Autobiography, 1849, p. 37.

³⁰ Greenville *Mountaineer*, June 11, 1830.

parish system of representation, for they had no intention of voting to abolish their own seats.³¹

Perry's legislative program included judicial and social as well as political reform. Throughout the ante-bellum period South Carolina had an antiquated system of justice. Punishments were severe and unreasonable; 165 offenses were punishable by death in 1813; twenty-two as late as 1850. Whipping and imprisonment for debt were common, and petty thieves were hanged. Consequently, juries refused to convict offenders and governors were forced to grant corrective pardons.³²

When editing the *Mountaineer*, Perry had urged revision of the penal code and establishment of a penitentiary system like that of New York:

It would in a great measure, supersede the necessity of those cruel and sanguinary laws, which disgrace the criminal code. . . . How long will it be before South Carolina adopts the humane policy of many of her Sister States? How long will it be before she dispenses with capital punishment, in all cases, except for treason and murder?³³

In 1838 he introduced a resolution for establishing a penitentiary, and was made chairman of a special committee to report to the next legislature. He took a deep interest in the matter, corresponding with keepers of several Northern penitentiaries, and gathering statistics about prosecutions and convictions from clerks of court throughout the state. He was especially assisted by a pamphlet on penal reform which Francis Lieber, the great German political scientist at South Carolina College, had prepared at the request of Governor Patrick Noble. At the 1839 session he made a comprehensive report, endeavoring to show that the object of punishment was not revenge, but reformation of the criminal and protection of society, and submitting at the same time a code of laws suitable for peni-

³¹ Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 11, 1840; Boucher, "Sectionalism, Representation, and the Electoral Question," *loc. cit.*, p. 8; Autobiography, 1874, p. 143.

³² Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 465-468.

³³ February 14, 1829, February 20, 1830.

tentiary punishment. Though unable to secure passage of the bill, he did not give up hope.³⁴ "I must confess that this is an object in which my feelings as a man and a christian are deeply interested," he wrote.³⁵

In 1846 Governor William Aiken recommended the penitentiary system and wrote Perry that he was counting largely on his able advocacy of the measure. But again there was no legislative response. In 1849 Perry became sanguine when presentments were made in favor of a penitentiary by grand juries from twenty districts in the state. He was made chairman of a special joint committee to make a report.³⁶ When the bill was defeated in the Senate, Perry wrote:

It must, some day, be adopted in South Carolina, but we are a most conservative people, and opposed to all improvements in law, politics, morals and physics. . . . Our quarrel with the general government for the last twenty years has absorbed all our thoughts and energies, until we are about twenty years behind our sister States in everything else—in that matter we are always ahead of the other States . . . but difficulties abroad shall never prevent an effort on my part to remedy evils at home.

. . . I am surprised such a people should be in favor of Rail Roads—they ought to stick to the old fashioned road wagon.³⁷

He advocated a comprehensive reform of the judicial system, including codification of the common as well as statute law, and reorganization of the courts. In 1829 he wrote: "We do most fervently hope, that our country will one day be governed by a system of laws which her citizens may find out and understand, without spending their lives in unravelling the black letter and jargon of a savage and barbarous age." He was in favor of uniting the courts of law and equity in South

³⁴ Journal, II, February 22, 1839, May 7, 1840; Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living*, II, 589; Francis Lieber to Perry, November 2, 1839, Perry Papers; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 20, 1839; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1839, pp. 45, 53.

³⁵ *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 17, 1840.

³⁶ William Aiken to Perry, October 19, 1846, Perry Papers; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1849, pp. 9, 42, 52, 107; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 7, 1849.

³⁷ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 14, 1849.

Carolina, and of creating a separate Court of Appeals.³⁸ Before his entrance into the legislature he wrote to prominent jurists for their opinions.³⁹ To Daniel Webster he wrote:

GREENVILLE—S. CAROLINA
July 20th 1836.

MY DEAR SIR

I had the honor some years since of a correspondence with you. You were then kind enough to answer one of my letters on a great Constitutional question which threatened the dismemberment of our Union. I now address you on a subject of vital importance to South Carolina although not of such magnitude as that of *State interposition*. It is with regard to the reorganization of our State Judiciary.

During the Storm of nullification, an enlightened & independent Judiciary, which had the virtue & boldness to check a most tyrannical system of unconstitutional legislation in South Carolina, fell a victim to party rage & violence. In order to get rid of two Judges a wise Judiciary system was abolished and a miserable, wretched impracticable one substituted in its place. It will be the duty of our next Legislature to reorganize the Judiciary entirely. I am anxious that it should be done in wisdom and on a permanent basis. All changes & alterations in the Judiciary are prejudicial to its independence & usefulness. Expecting to be in the Legislature I am anxious to know your views & opinions on two points. In giving them to me you may confer a lasting benefit on the State.

First—is it better to have a distinct & sepperate Court of Equity from that of Law, composed of distinct & sepperate Judges—or had we better blend the Courts of Equity & Law as is the case in Massachusetts & in the Federal Court? How has the system worked in Massachusetts & in the Federal Courts? Are not the same Judges equally competent to administer both law & Equity?

Secondly is it better to have a *sepperate Court* of Appeals, or to require the *Circuit Judges* to hold the Appeal Court as is the case in the U States Court? Are there any advantages to be derived from making an Appeal Judge do circuit duty & a circuit Judge

³⁸ Autobiography, 1849, pp. 36-37; Greenville *Mountaineer*, December 5, 19, 26, 1829, January 7, 1848.

³⁹ James Dent to Perry, August 4, 1836, Perry Papers; William Gaston to *idem*, September 22, 1836, *ibid*.

appeal duty? Will not the expense of such a system and the delay in doing business counter-balance any advantages to be derived from it?

I hope you will not consider me impertinent in requesting the favour which I now ask. It is with a view of benefitting the State of South Carolina by the opinions of one so distinguished & so profoundly learned in the jurisprudence of our country as yourself.

I am my dear sir with great respect for your public & private character yours sincerely,

B. F. PERRY

HON DANIEL WEBSTER
BOSTON⁴⁰

Confirmed in his opinions, he fought for reform on the floor of the House, condemning the existing system as intolerable. But it was not till 1859 that the separate Court of Appeals was re-established, and the courts of law and equity remained distinct till 1868.⁴¹

As a typical up-country representative, Perry supported a program of economy in the legislature and consistently opposed any connection between the state and banking. He noted that the senators of the low country, which paid by far the greater part of the state taxes, were comparatively lavish in granting money; whereas the up country considered itself "special guardian angel of the public money." During his first year in the House he opposed the appropriation of \$1,000,000 to aid the Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston Railroad, deeming it extravagant and wasteful. When, however, in 1838 the road was prospering and needed \$2,000,000 to save its charter, he voted for the appropriation to keep the state from losing its investment. He nearly always voted against pensions and increase of public officials' salaries. In 1838, when chairman of the Committee on Claims in the House, he zealously guarded the people's money.⁴²

⁴⁰ Daniel Webster Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

⁴¹ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 24, 1836; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 460-463.

⁴² *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 5, 1829, December 24, 31, 1836, August 3, 1838, December 15, 1837, July 17, 1840, December 20, 1844, January 7, 1848.

As chairman of the Committee on Finance and Banks during his four years in the Senate, Perry waged an unrelenting war against the Bank of the State. The campaign against it in the forties was an outgrowth of the general distrust of banks following the Panic of 1837. The Bank of the State of South Carolina, however, had a record for efficient and profitable administration unequaled by that of any other state. Established in 1812, it had been a great financial boon to the state, paying not only the interest but much of the principal of the public debt. Perry was not a distruster of all banks. In the House he had opposed the general movement against them, urging their necessity in every community. He had even commended the Bank of the State for its loans to agricultural interests and for several wise investments. But he was strongly opposed to operation of banks either by the national or state governments.⁴³

By 1844 he had joined Governor J. H. Hammond and C. G. Memminger in their determination to wind up the Bank of the State, the charter of which would expire in 1856 unless renewed. In 1847, when he presented the report of the president, Franklin H. Elmore, in the Senate, resolutions questioning management of the institution were brought up and referred to the Committee on Finance and Banks. Perry, in due honesty, reported that its conduct in managing its affairs in Europe had been "faithful, sagacious and wise." But he was convinced that the state should have nothing to do with banking, which should be left to private companies or individual enterprise. A president elected by the legislature, no matter how able, could not manage the bank "as his wisdom and prudence would dictate, and as the best interests of the Bank would require."⁴⁴

In 1848 C. G. Memminger, leader of the antibank campaign, carried resolutions in the House against the recharter of

⁴³ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 396-397, 481-484; *Greenville Mountaineer*, August 3, September 21, 1838, January 7, 1848, September 13, 1850; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1839, pp. 95-96.

⁴⁴ *Journal*, II, August 27, 1843; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 3, 1847, January 7, 1848; *South Carolina Senate Journal*, 1847, pp. 37, 105, 136, 171.

the bank, but failed to secure appointment of a committee to prepare a winding-up bill.⁴⁵ Just before the 1849 session, Elmore, who had heard that Governor Whitemarsh B. Seabrook would recommend the immediate liquidation of the bank, wrote to Perry:

Your course as a public man has always been characterized by openness & candor as well as by a statesmanship that looks beyond the moments victory into the more important results of the future. . . .

Now My Dear Sir On you & on your course more will depend than any man in the Legislature—perhaps in the State—You can stay this ill advised & rash measure & save your State & perhaps the whole South much trouble. . . .⁴⁶

But Perry candidly replied:

I regard Banks as essential to the prosperity of every civilized people—I was their advocate, in the Legislature, when assailed by almost the whole State—But I am opposed to all connection between Bank & State. The operations of a Bank require confidence and secrecy. These are virtues never to be found in a Legislative assembly.

I need not assure you privately, of what I have done publicly, that in your honor, integrity & wisdom as President of the Bank I have entire confidence. The Legislature have given you annually a new set of hungry insolvent Directors, who must, I am sure, contribute very little to the kindest [?] management of the Bank. Had the Institution been left entirely to your own care & a few of the Directors whom I might name, I have no doubt its losses would have been less & its prosperity greater. But it is absolutely necessary that the public funds should be under the control of the Government & this renders the Government incapable of Banking with wisdom & success.

As to the proper course to be pursued by the Legislature in regard to the Bank of the State I have formed no definite opinion. This I shall do, after being put in possession of the necessary information to come to a correct conclusion.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 482, 484.

⁴⁶ November 16, 1849, Perry Papers.

⁴⁷ November 22, 1849, Franklin H. Elmore Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

Thereafter, having returned to the House, he followed Memminger. The bank question was the chief issue of the session. Memminger was successful in having it referred to a special Joint Committee, which reported a bill for the gradual closing of the bank, in view of the termination of its charter in 1856. The report of the Examining Committee was spread before both houses, and heated debates ensued. Large loans had been made to the officers and directors, but they were amply secured; no hint of mismanagement or corruption could be found; and the bank had been an indispensable financial aid to the state. Its opponents concentrated their attacks upon its political influence—it was a “monied oligarchy,” maintaining control over the state by special favors to legislators and large business concerns. The president was active in both politics and business; the Nesbit Manufacturing Company, of which he was president, was a heavy debtor of the bank. Memminger, in clear and forcible argument, left no stone unturned to discredit the institution. Perry proclaimed it a dangerous and corrupting power that might one day involve South Carolina in bankruptcy and ruin. John S. Preston made “the most brilliant effort of oratory” of the session in its defense. The committee’s winding-up bill failed of passage by only one vote. Again, Calhoun’s influence had triumphed; the South would need support from banking institutions in its impending conflict with the North.⁴⁸

If Perry showed a dogmatic temper in his policy toward the Bank of the State, it was more than counterbalanced by his tolerance on several other issues. When the legislature, dominated by Calhoun, refused in 1841 to receive South Carolina’s share of the fund distributed from the sale of public lands, dubbing it an “unconstitutional & ruinous measure” and “Clay’s bribe” to make a high tariff acceptable, Perry voted against the resolution. He had offered a substitute, which

⁴⁸ Elmore to Perry, November 16, 1849, Perry Papers; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 7, 14, 1849; *Journal*, II, January 17, 1850; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1849, pp. 92, 127, 148, 156, 230-236; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 483-484.

would have allowed South Carolina to receive the fund if the distribution act (which he also considered unconstitutional) were not repealed.⁴⁹ After the lowering of the tariff in 1846, he persistently introduced resolutions for an agent to receive the state's portion of the proceeds, which was lying idle and unclaimed. It had been wrong, he argued, for the General Government to distribute the fund to afford a pretext for increasing the tariff; but now that the tariff was reduced, South Carolina might honorably accept her portion of the spoils which had been taken from her people. He saw no logic in refusing what all the other states had accepted; South Carolina had received \$1,000,000 in the same way in 1837. But Perry's efforts to thwart Calhoun's policy of isolating the state from the nation repeatedly failed.⁵⁰

In the Senate in 1844 Perry displayed his independence by voting alone against a resolution requesting the Governor to expel Judge Samuel Hoar of Massachusetts, who had come to Charleston to institute a test case against the South Carolina Negro seamen's act of 1822. This law was a result of the terror aroused by the Vesey conspiracy. It required that any free Negro aboard a vessel in port should be lodged in jail at the expense of the owner of the vessel until its departure. Judge Hoar was sent by Massachusetts to institute proceedings in the Federal court in regard to several Massachusetts Negroes who had been imprisoned under the act. A Charleston mob threatened violence, and the legislature resolved that Hoar came "not as a citizen of the United States but as the emissary of a foreign government, hostile to our domestic institutions, and with the sole purpose of subverting our internal peace."⁵¹ Perry wrote to his wife from Columbia:

Yesterday was a day of great excitement in both houses. The

⁴⁹ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 476; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 24, 1841; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1841, pp. 123-125.

⁵⁰ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 25, 1846, December 10, 1847, January 7, 1848; *South Carolina Senate Journal*, 1847, p. 68; *South Carolina House Journal*, 1849, pp. 115-116. South Carolina applied for the money when contemplating secession in 1850 (Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 476).

⁵¹ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 496-498; *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 13, 1844; *South Carolina Senate Journal*, 1844, p. 47.

members seemed to be crazy on the subject of the Massachusetts Mission. The House of Representatives passed a resolution expelling Mr. Hoar, with but one dissenting vote (Colonel Memminger). In the Senate, *your husband* was the only man who opposed them. I stood alone against the *whole* Senate, and I made a most exciting speech. There were a great many members who *thought* with me, but had not the *boldness* to act with me. This vote has given Colonel Memminger and myself quite a distinction—a *minority of one*.⁵²

Perry's action was due wholly to his sense of justice; he was no less anxious to protect the slavery interests of his state than any other member. Only a few years earlier he had voted for an act to prevent citizens of New York from carrying off slaves when they came to South Carolina.⁵³ The expulsion of Hoar he regarded as a usurpation of judicial power by the legislature—a violation of both the state and Federal constitutions, which guaranteed trial by jury.⁵⁴

⁵² Perry, *Letters to Wife* (Second Series), p. 47.

⁵³ *Greenville Mountaineer*, December 24, 1841; *Journal*, II, February 18, 1842; *Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina*, 1841, pp. 149-152. The act was a retaliatory measure against the personal liberty laws of New York (*ibid.*).

⁵⁴ Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living*, II, 589.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Threat of Secession, 1849-1851

IN 1849 state issues in South Carolina became submerged in the slavery issue. A concerted South was rising in indignant protest against the threat of the Wilmot Proviso. Whigs and Democrats, Unionists and Secessionists joined hands in the movement, for Southerners would brook no interference by the North with their peculiar institution. Calhoun had quietly advanced his plan for a Southern party, and in January, 1849, the movement was formally launched when a caucus of Southern congressmen adopted his "Address of the Southern Delegation in Congress to their Constituents." Though only 48 of the 118 Southern members signed it—for the Whigs held aloof, trusting to the Taylor administration—Calhoun regarded its adoption as a "decided triumph under [the] circumstances." Throughout the spring and summer, he ceaselessly urged the call of a Southern convention to present an unbroken front against the aggressions of the North. "Now is the time to vindicate our rights," he wrote. "We ought rather than to yield an inch, take any alternative, even if it should be disunion, and I trust that such will be the termination of the South."¹

South Carolina was practically unanimous in its support of the Southern movement. "Anti-Wilmot Proviso Meetings,"

¹ Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, April 16, 1848, in Jameson (ed.), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *loc. cit.*, p. 751; *idem* to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, January 24, 1849, *ibid.*, pp. 761-762; *idem* to James H. Hammond, February 14, 1849, *ibid.*, p. 763; *idem* to John H. Means, April 13, 1849, *ibid.*, pp. 764-765; *idem* to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849, *ibid.*, p. 769; Meigs, *John Caldwell Calhoun*, II, 426-432.

without distinction of party, were held in almost every district. In the Greenville meeting on May 7, resolutions offered by G. F. Townes were adopted, heartily approving the Southern Address and pledging co-operation against the Wilmot Proviso and "all kindred schemes of Abolition aggression." Seven delegates, headed by Perry, were appointed to meet with the delegates from other districts in Columbia on May 14. Likewise, a Committee of Vigilance and Safety—of which Perry was also a member—was appointed to correspond with the Central State Committee and submit "such information to the people as may be deemed important to protect their interests against all Abolition movements."²

At the Columbia convention, in which twenty-nine districts were represented, Perry was on the resolutions committee which called attention to the "alarming and imminent peril" hanging over "the institutions and sovereign rights of the slaveholding states," and declared the readiness of South Carolina to enter into concerted action with other Southern states, and its determination to resist the passage of the Wilmot Proviso "at every hazard." In a speech endorsing the resolutions, Perry announced that he was for strong measures; for his own part he had long desired a Southern convention, but deferred to his friends in not pressing its immediate call; he was sure that such a step would finally be taken.³ He thus explains his motive in his Journal:

My notion is that if the Southern States were to meet in Convention & act with unanimity they might preserve the Constitution, the Union & their own honor & rights—The sooner this is done the better—I love the Union of these States, & look upon their dissolution with horror approaching despair. Nor have I much dread of a dissolution even on the subject of Slavery—It will be settled like all great questions have, since the organization of our government.⁴

² Philip M. Hamer, *The Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852* (Allentown, Penn., 1918), pp. 31-32; *Greenville Mountaineer*, February 23, March 16, May 11, 1849.

³ *Columbia Daily Telegraph*, May 14-16, 1849.

⁴ II, August 6, 1849.

Calhoun was convinced that a Southern convention was the only solution, but did not wish South Carolina to initiate the movement, as her leadership would stamp it with disunionism in the eyes of the other Southern states. Accordingly, he arranged with Mississippi leaders to have the movement inaugurated there. The Mississippi state convention in October, 1849, issued the call for a Southern convention at Nashville the following June.⁵ Meanwhile, the movement gathered force in South Carolina. Fourth of July celebrations rang with speeches on Southern rights and threats of resistance. The legislature in December heartily endorsed the action of Mississippi, elected four state delegates to attend the Nashville convention, and recommended that two other delegates be elected from each congressional district.⁶

II

Application of California for admission into the Union under a constitution prohibiting slavery brought the territorial question to a head in the fall of 1849. Since its admission would upset the balance between free and slave states in the Senate, Southern Democrats were determined to resist it even to the point of dissolution of the Union; while Southern Whigs, being nationalistic as well as proslavery, took a more moderate view and were willing to acquiesce provided they could secure at the same time a just compromise on the rest of the Mexican cession and other questions. Union Democrats, such as Henry S. Foote, of Mississippi, and Howell Cobb, of Georgia, united with the Whigs. But Calhoun regarded the proposal as worse than the Wilmot Proviso, and this was the view of most Southern Democrats. Throughout January the conflict raged in Congress. Southern Whigs, led by Alexander

⁵ Calhoun to Andrew Pickens Calhoun, July 24, 1849, in Jameson (ed.), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *loc. cit.*, p. 769; Henry S. Foote to Calhoun, September 25, 1849, *ibid.*, pp. 1204-1205; Calhoun to Collin S. Tarpley, July 9, 1849, in Southern Historical Association *Publications*, VI (July, 1902), 415-416; Cleo Hearon, "Mississippi and the Compromise of 1850," *Mississippi Historical Society Publications*, XIV (1913), 63-67, 117.

⁶ *Columbia Daily Telegraph*, July 6, 27, 1849; *Greenville Mountaineer*, July 6, 13, November 2, December 7, 14, 1849.

H. Stephens and Robert Toombs, of Georgia, united with the Southern Democrats to force concessions from the North.⁷

Finally the tension was relieved on January 29 by the introduction of a compromise scheme in the Senate by Henry Clay. In a series of resolutions he sought to remove the chief causes of discord: California was to be admitted under its free constitution; territorial governments were to be organized in New Mexico and Utah without restriction as to slavery; the boundary between Texas and New Mexico was to be settled by giving the disputed area to New Mexico, with a money payment to Texas; slave trade in the District of Columbia was to be prohibited; a more effective fugitive-slave law was to be enacted. Throughout the spring the plan was fought on the floors of Congress. Conservative Southerners were in sympathy with Clay's patriotic motives, but did not wish to vote for the compromise by separate measures, being unwilling to concede the admission of California without compensation to the South. When, through the efforts of Henry S. Foote, the measures were reintroduced on May 8 as the "Omnibus Bill," Southern Whigs and Union Democrats in general supported them. Most Southern Democrats, however, regarded them as no concession at all to the South; Jefferson Davis and Albert G. Brown, of Mississippi, vied with Calhoun in denouncing them. But Calhoun's ultimatum to the North in his famous speech of March 4 alienated the more conservative Southerners. Foote hastened to announce that, in his opinion, Calhoun had not consulted with any other Southern senator. Webster's conciliatory speech on March 7, added to Clay's noble efforts, brought public opinion to favor the measures. Thereafter Southern Whig journals, as well as the press of the North,

⁷ Cole, *Whig Party in the South*, pp. 149-157; Henry S. Foote, *War of the Rebellion: or Scylla and Charybdis* (New York, 1866), pp. 101-103; Howell Cobb to his wife, December 2, 4, 20, 22, 1849, in Ulrich B. Phillips (ed.), "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," *American Historical Association Report*, 1911, II, 177-180; Calhoun to James H. Hammond, January 4, 1850, in Jameson (ed.), "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *loc. cit.*, p. 779; New York *Daily Tribune*, January 25, 28, 29, 1850; Armistead Burt to Perry, January 16, 1850, Perry Papers.

supported them. But in Congress, by the combined efforts of the Southern Democrats, Free-Soilers, and Northern Whigs, the measures were defeated one by one in July.⁸

III

While in the spring and summer of 1850 public opinion in most of the Southern states—under the influence of the Whigs—was reacting in favor of the Compromise, disunion sentiment was rampant in South Carolina. Because of the weakness of the Whig party there was no nucleus for an opposition, and the Democrats were almost unanimous in their adherence to Calhoun. After his death on March 31, memorial ceremonies throughout the state attested the idolatrous worship of the populace. Extremists under the leadership of Rhett and Governor Whitemarsh B. Seabrook were already scheming separate state secession if the plan for a Southern congress failed.⁹

But Perry had looked upon Calhoun's uncompromising course with sharp disapproval. Of his death, he wrote:

I regard his death as fortunate for the country & his own fame. The Slavery question will now be settled. He would have been an obstacle in the way. His course has been always in the extreme. It would have been against his fame if he had opposed & prevented the settlement of this great & dangerous question. His death has relieved South Carolina of political despotism. Every man may now breathe more freely as England did after the death of Henry the Eighth. There will be divisions amongst us & I am glad of it.¹⁰

Thompson, Petigru, Preston, and Poinsett agreed with Perry;

⁸ *Congressional Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 244-247; Foote, *War of the Rebellion*, pp. 115-116, 130-131, 140-142, 174; Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences* (Washington, 1874), pp. 24-27; *New York Daily Tribune*, February 6, 14, 20, 25, 26, March 6, 7, 18, 20, 28, 1850; Meigs, *John Caldwell Calhoun*, II, 449-466; Cole, *Whig Party in the South*, pp. 165-166; Hearon, *Mississippi and the Compromise of 1850*, pp. 91-116, 129-137.

⁹ *New York Daily Tribune*, March 6, 9, 13, 18, 26, 27, 29, April 3, 4, 1850; Cole, *Whig Party in the South*, pp. 171, 192; Ulrich B. Phillips, *The Life of Robert Toombs* (New York, 1913), pp. 95-96; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 107-113; *Greenville Mountaineer*, May 3, 1850; *Columbia Daily Telegraph*, April 19—May 18, 1850.

¹⁰ *Journal*, II, April 28, 1850.

and Preston remarked that Calhoun's death was the interposition of God to save the country. He and Poinsett both believed that Calhoun was bent on the destruction of the Union. Francis Lieber wrote: "I cannot help thinking that Calhoun's death will be healing rather than otherwise."¹¹

When the Nashville convention assembled on June 3, so great was the reaction throughout the South that only nine states were represented—and not all of those by full delegations. It was apparent that South Carolina was more radical than the others. Under the presidency of William L. Sharkey, a prominent Whig leader of Mississippi, the convention took moderate action, demanding extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, but deferring the question of resistance to a second meeting. The South Carolina delegation kept in the background to avoid prejudice, but Rhett scored a triumph when he secured appointment as chairman of the committee to prepare an address to the people of the slaveholding states. He drafted a highly radical document, criticizing all parts of the Compromise and declaring that the people of the South "must rule themselves or perish." After his return to South Carolina, he boldly announced his scheme for dissolution of the Union by separate state secession, since he saw no hope of concerted action. He urged Georgia to take the lead, promising that South Carolina would follow.¹²

Though disunionism steadily mounted in South Carolina during the summer, a few dispassionate conservatives were willing to accept the Compromise as a satisfactory adjustment. Conspicuous among them were prominent members of the defunct Whig party—William Grayson, Richard Yeadon, William C. Preston, Waddy Thompson, and Petigru; some of the large slaveholders among the Democrats, such as Robert Barn-

¹¹ *Ibid.*, April 28, May 19, June 10, 1850; Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, pp. 237, 244; F. Lieber to George S. Hillard, 1850, in Thomas S. Perry, *The Life and Letters of Francis Lieber* (Boston, 1882), p. 244.

¹² Cole, *Whig Party in the South*, p. 171; Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences*, p. 80; St. George Sioussat, "Tennessee, the Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, II (December, 1915), 331; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 107-111.

well; and the staunch Union Democrats of old, such as Perry, Poinsett, and O'Neill.¹³ Richard Yeadon wrote Perry early in June:

Amid the almost innumerable desertions from our Union Ranks I am delighted to find you still reasonable & firm, patriotic to the nation, as well as true to the South—for the two are perfectly compatible. If no reasonable compromise can be obtained from our Northern brethren, I am ready for disunion as a dire & hateful alternative & refuge from intolerable insult & wrong—but I unhesitatingly prefer Clay's compromise to disunion & will resolutely stand up to that mark.¹⁴

During the meeting of the Nashville convention Perry wrote of the Compromise: "I think it should be adopted—But the whole State of South Carolina is opposed to it—and a large portion of the State for disunion *per se!*" After the adjournment of the convention he wrote:

The Compromise in Congress is still under discussion, & its fate doubtful. I hope however that Congress will settle this question of slavery in some way before they adjourn.

There is a spirit of disunion abroad in South Carolina, which I am sorry to see. I love the Union, & am not willing to give it up—& still hope that there is good sense enough, North & South, to preserve it. The Northern people derive from the South their sources of wealth & prosperity—The people of the South draw from the North, their comfort luxuries & conveniences. To both the Union gives safety.

Perry agreed with Poinsett and O'Neill that Clay's Compromise was better than the Missouri Compromise and should be accepted. When it was finally passed in September and disunionists over the South were looking hopefully to Georgia to take the lead in secession, he wrote:

The State of Georgia will find herself in a sad dilemma. She has ordered the Governor to call a convention in case California is admitted into the Union! What can she do, when her Convention

¹³ Journal, II, May 19, June 6, July 3, 1850; Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, p. 238.

¹⁴ June 4, 1850, Perry Papers.

assemblies! Secede say the ultras. What will she gain by that act of folly & madness? How much of California will she have after secession? Georgia may expect to throw herself in the breach & be sustained by the other Southern States, and in this way bring about a dissolution of the Union—I have no doubt she would be sustained by South Carolina—But the Southern States would not unite in such a movement—The feeling of loyalty to the Union is too strong. The admission of California is wrong, & a great fraud on the South, but in it there is no violation of the Constitution or point of honor so far as the South is concerned.¹⁵

But when Governor Towns of Georgia ordered election of a state convention on November 3, to convene on December 10, the *Greenville Mountaineer*, which since the first of the year had been edited by an ardent young Secessionist, W. H. Campbell, voiced the hopes of the radicals of South Carolina: "Let Georgia take her position to maintain her own honor and the rights of the South, and she may count with certainty on being sustained immediately by South Carolina, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, and eventually by the whole South."¹⁶

In the fall excited public meetings in opposition to the Compromise were held in every district in the state, for secession had engulfed most of the up country as well as the low. Spartanburg went for resistance, Union and Laurens for secession. On October 1 Pendleton held a mass meeting, which was addressed by Memminger in a flaming speech denouncing the Compromise as the Wilmot Proviso in substance and advocating secession by South Carolina alone if the Southern congress failed. The October election for the legislature returned Secessionists from every district but Greenville, where Perry and his Unionist colleagues, Thomas P. Brockman and Perry E. Duncan, gained a glorious victory on an "Anti-Bank and Compromise" ticket.¹⁷ Perry was elated. "My old friends have stood by me firmly & warmly," he wrote. "There were

¹⁵ Journal, II, June 6, 10, 23, July 5, August 4, 25, September 14, 1850.

¹⁶ September 27, 1850.

¹⁷ Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852*, pp. 65-66; Journal, II, October 5, 10, 1850; *Greenville Mountaineer*, October 4, 11, 18, 1850; editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, May 2, 1851.

great efforts made to defeat me—by the Bank men & the *disunionists*.”¹⁸

But disunion had swept the state. Even Charleston cashiered all the Unionist candidates in the election. Rhett and the *Mercury* were dominating the scene, and the once-conservative *Courier* announced its conviction that a dissolution of the Union was inevitable. Richard Yeadon wrote to Perry: “The feeling here is not yet fully developed—seemingly there is a majority against separate state action, but excitement is advancing with giant strides & I am prepared for any & all extravagances of absurdity & oppression.”¹⁹ Attending Laurens court late in October, Perry wrote: “I had a good deal of conversation with Judge Frost, General Whitner, Young, Orr etc. on politics—They all seem mad except Judge Frost & he is openly a disunionist, though not a secessionist.” Of the conservatives who later became prominent Co-operationists, only Francis W. Pickens seems at that time to have entertained moderate views. After a conversation with him in July, Perry wrote: “He goes for defending our rights, & preserving the Union. . . . Col. Pickens is opposed to separate State action, & thinks, very properly, that the whole South should act together.”²⁰ In October Pickens wrote to Perry: “Consultation—cordial concert—and harmony with our sister states identified with us, is the first great point to be gained. I am therefore for a Southern Convention or Congress. . . . I believe the South will finally act together, at least the cotton states, & if so, the danger is passed.”²¹

There was no rallying point for the scattered Unionists of the state. All the organization and maneuvering were on the side of the Secessionists. Governor Seabrook was secretly supporting Rhett’s demand for separate state secession, assuring Governor John A. Quitman, of Mississippi, that South Carolina would follow Georgia and Mississippi in leaving the

¹⁸ Journal, II, October 20, 1850.

¹⁹ Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852*, p. 66; R. Yeadon to Perry, October 17, 1850, Perry Papers.

²⁰ Journal, II, October 20, July 9, 1850.

²¹ October 30, 1850, Perry Papers.

Union. Secessionist pamphlets by Edward S. Bryan, William Henry Trescot, and John Townsend were widely circulated. Though William J. Grayson, on October 17, wrote a strong public letter to Governor Seabrook, praising the benefits of the Union, deprecating the project of a Southern confederacy, and especially denouncing separate secession, he was practically ignored by the press. Every newspaper in the state had gone over to secession.²²

IV

At this critical stage Perry suggested to Waddy Thompson and several other friends of Greenville the establishment of a newspaper as a nucleus for rallying the broken Union party of the state. Accordingly, they held a stockholders' meeting on October 26 to organize; Perry, Thompson, Wesley Brooks, and Benajah Dunham subscribed \$500 each, Perry Duncan \$300, and C. J. Elford \$100. As Perry expressed it, they were determined "that there should be at least one newspaper through which the unterrified sons of Carolina might speak forth their sentiments."²³

The prospectus was published in the newspapers of the state as follows:

PROSPECTUS
OF
"THE SOUTHERN PATRIOT"
TO BE PUBLISHED AT GREENVILLE, S. C.

It is proposed to issue an independent Tri-weekly and Weekly

²² Governor Seabrook to Governor Quitman, September 20, October 23, 1850, in J. F. H. Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman: Major-General, U.S.A., and Governor of the State of Mississippi* (New York, 1860), II, 36-38; Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Literary Movement for Secession," *Studies in Southern History and Politics* (New York, 1914), pp. 40-42; Robert D. Bass (ed.), "William J. Grayson Autobiography with Introduction" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1933), Introduction, pp. 191-202; Autobiography, 1874, p. 145; editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, November 4, 1852. In the fall of 1850 the press was unanimous in urging secession; not until the following spring was there a complete breach between those advocating united action by the South and those for independent action by South Carolina. Even then most newspapers remained ardent separate secessionists (Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852*, pp. 72-75, 101).

²³ Autobiography, 1874, p. 145; Journal, II, October 25, 1850; editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, February 19, 1852.

Newspaper, in the Town of Greenville, South Carolina, to be styled the "Southern Patriot," devoted to Commerce, Agriculture, Manufactures, Politics, Literature, Science and the general improvement of the country, in all her industrial pursuits—*Defending the Rights of the South, the Federal Constitution, and the Integrity of the Union of the States*—and opposing the anti-republican, ruinous and corrupting policy of South Carolina's continuing in the hazards and speculation of Banking.

"The Southern Patriot" has organized with and belongs to an association of Gentlemen who own nearly a thousand Slaves and are worth several hundred thousand dollars. This should be regarded by the community, independent of their honor, their lives and their characters, as some guarantee of fidelity to the South, and, at least, as an earnest of their interest in the justice, wisdom and stability of the Government. . . .

The undersigned have been charged, by the Proprietors, with the Editorial department of the "Southern Patriot." It is not without reluctance that they assume this grave responsibility; but having done so, neither time, labor, nor energy shall be wanting, on their part, to make the Paper worthy of public patronage. . . .

The publication of the "Southern Patriot" will commence on the 1st day of January next.

B. F. PERRY,
C. J. ELFORD,
EDITORS²⁴

On November 1 the Secessionists of Greenville held a rally in the courthouse, to which were invited all the citizens of the district. Memminger addressed them for nearly two hours in a fiery disunionist speech, ending with the exhortation:

If, however, other Southern States should refuse to meet with us, and we are brought to the alternative of submission or resistance, for one, I say, let us secede from the Union and abide our fate for better or for worse. If we are to wear chains, I prefer they should be put on me by force. I, at least, will have no part in forging them.²⁵

When Thompson and Perry attempted to reply, they were

²⁴ Greenville Mountaineer, December 6, 1850.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

interrupted with shouts and hisses by the angry audience, all of whom "except a few *union renegades*" were Perry's old enemies, the Nullifiers. It was a stormy meeting. One might have supposed, said Perry, that a legion of fiery spirits had broken loose from the regions below. Late that night the Secessionists, "with drum and fife and loud huzzas," paraded the streets of Greenville, threatening destruction to the office of the *Southern Patriot*, and tar and feathers for the Unionist leaders.²⁶

Next day a friend said to Perry: "You will now abandon the idea of establishing a Union newspaper in Greenville. Your property will not be safe if you do."

"The *Southern Patriot* shall go on, if it sinks every cent of property I have in the world, and sacrifices my life into the bargain!" replied Perry.²⁷

The renegade Greenville *Mountaineer* now joined the Pendleton *Messenger* in gloating over the "dethronement of the old dynasty" in Greenville by the "magic power and influence of Mr. Memminger's eloquence."²⁸ But Perry had faith in his mountain district. "I do not believe however that Greenville has yet gone over to disunion," he wrote. "The ballot Box will tell a different story." Elford, a talented lawyer and businessman much younger than Perry, was not so confident. He was disposed to back out, thinking the community so prejudiced that the paper would not be sustained. But Perry was determined to make the attempt, and Elford fell in line.

On November 17 Perry wrote:

We are still pushing ahead with the Southern Patriot & hope to succeed. Elford goes on Monday to purchase type, etc. We are scattering the Prospectus all over the Country. It is our purpose when the Paper starts to send it everywhere, whether it is subscribed for or not. We will try & do good in spite of popular opinion. But my impression is that Greenville District is still sound to the

²⁶ Journal, II, November 7, 1850; editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, February 28, 1851.

²⁷ Editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, October 23, 1851.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, February 28, 1851.

core—The Papers throughout the State have opened their batteries on the Southern Patriot in advance, for the purpose of prejudicing public opinion against us.

It is unpleasant to be always in a turmoil & state of excitement. There is no man who loves peace more than I do, and very few who have had more difficulties to contend with in life.²⁹

The disunion press made merciless attacks upon the promoters of the paper, but Perry found compensation in the response of his Unionist friends. Petigru wrote as soon as he saw the announcement:

MY DEAR PERRY,

The prospectus of the Southern Patriot fills my heart with thanks. I began to think that the spirit of the Republic was dead. You have revived my hopes—Enclosed are 30 Dollars—for 10 subscribers. I will send you their names by & by. . . .

James O'Hanlon wrote:

I would to God it could have been started some months or year ago—It might have been a check to the madness and folly which now governs nearly every press in the State. . . . The manner in which the "Southern Patriot" has been assailed shows too truly the feeling that rules the State

. . . Really my dear Sir—the times are strangely out of joint—Some of the Old Union Men are acting a very strange and inconsistent part, I regret it deeply. . . . Memmingers conduct of late is inexcusable. . . .

May God prosper the right and save our glorious country from anarchy and revolution.

Poinsett wrote in December:

I have just returned home, and received your proposals for publishing a conservative paper, a design worthy of you & which I shall take pleasure in promoting—So soon as I can go among my neighbors I will send the list, in the meantime remember me & send me a copy as soon as out.

Dr. Webb of Anderson rejoiced that an independent journal was at last to be started.

²⁹ Journal, II, November 7, 11, 17, 1850; Autobiography, 1874, p. 219; W. Thompson to Perry, November 21, December 5, 1850, Perry Papers.

I am perfectly sick and tired of the old *Tale* and *one sided Game* & I believe that a large portion of all the sturdy men in Country are. . . . A number of our Citizens I am confident would take the paper if they were not afraid of having their business injured thereby.³⁰

V

The Secessionists over the South received a stunning blow when the convention election in Georgia on November 3 resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Unionists. The skilful campaign for the Compromise conducted by Stephens, Toombs, and Cobb was triumphant; there was no further hope that the "Empire State of the South" would lead in secession. Disunionists could now pin their hopes only on Mississippi. Again, however, they were disappointed, for though the legislature, dominated by Governor Quitman, passed a convention bill on November 30, the election of delegates was not ordered until September of the following year. It was clear that Mississippi would not take the lead. The second Nashville convention on November 11 proved conclusively that there was no further hope of concerted action by the South. Delegates from only seven states attended, and the radicals were in control. Langdon Cheves spoke three hours, strongly urging secession and pleading for a Southern confederacy, and the convention recommended a Southern congress, but everyone knew that it would never meet.³¹

Perry anticipated a turbulent session of the legislature, for Rhett and the radicals would now attempt to secure the immediate secession of South Carolina to force the issue on the other Southern states. He fully expected that a convention would be called and that it would vote for secession. "It really seems

³⁰ Chauncey S. Boucher, "The Secession and Co-Operation Movements in South Carolina, 1848 to 1852," *Washington University Studies*, Humanistic Series, V (April, 1918), 108; Petigru to Perry, November 5, 1850, Perry Papers; James O'Hanlon to *idem*, November 15, 1850, *ibid.*; J. R. Poinsett to *idem*, December 16, 1850, *ibid.*; Edward Webb to *idem*, December 25, 1850, *ibid.*

³¹ R. P. Brooks, "Howell Cobb and the Crisis of 1850," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV (December, 1917), 289-290; New York *Daily Tribune*, October 25, November 4, 5, December 2, 3, 4, 12, 1850; Charleston *Mercury*, November 28, 1850; Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852*, pp. 71-72.

difficult to account for the madness of politicians," he wrote. "How strange that the people of South Carolina should be entirely alienated from the Union . . . ready to break up a Government under which they have lived in unparalleled prosperity & happiness!"³² Petigru wrote to him in the same vein:

It really does seem that the atmosphere is infected, and reason driven from mens minds by an epidemic. . . . But nothing so absurd can long rule the thoughts of men. . . . I am sure that a reaction will take place, and I perceive symptoms of it already in the tone in which they speak now of separate state action. At this time very few here give it any countenance. . . .³³

The session proved the stormiest that Perry had ever witnessed. A majority were in favor of immediate secession, and labored to push through a convention bill, but they could not secure the necessary two-thirds vote. A well-defined minority was equally determined not to alienate South Carolina from her sister states, and insisted on electing delegates to the Southern congress recommended by the Nashville convention instead. Reaction was setting in. There were only three avowed Unionists in the legislature—Perry, Brockman, and Duncan, of Greenville; but the Secessionists who were in favor of co-operative action, like Barnwell and Cheves, united with them. Rhett was in Columbia directing the radicals. The conflict raged for days, but finally on December 18 compromise bills were passed providing for both a state convention and representation at the Southern congress. The Secessionists were able to have elections for the former set for the following February, but the conservatives would allow no date to be fixed for its meeting, since it was supposed to await the action of the Southern congress—elections for which were to be held in October, 1851.³⁴

³² Journal, II, November 7, 17, 20, 1850; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 112-113.

³³ November 18, 1850, Perry Papers.

³⁴ Journal, II, December 29, 1850; Boucher, "The Secession and Co-operation Movements in South Carolina, 1848 to 1852," *loc. cit.*, pp. 112-114; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, p. 113; editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, May 2, 1851; *Columbia Tri-Weekly South Carolinian*, December 20, 1850.

Perry had borne the brunt of the battle against the radical majority. On December 11, when the disunionists were pressing every effort for a convention, he made a stirring speech for a Southern congress as the only feasible means for redressing the wrongs of the South. Enumerating the benefits derived from the Union, he reminded the legislature that the slaveholding states, with the support of the Democracy of the North, had always been able to control the Federal Government. Though admitting that wrongs had been inflicted on the South, he did not believe that its honor, happiness, and prosperity would be promoted by a dissolution of the Union. "I do, Mr. Chairman," he declared, "venerate this Union, and am disposed to hold on to it until dishonor or oppression force me, as a Southern man, to break it asunder." As for the agitation for secession to protect slavery, he said: "I regard the dissolution of the Union as the most fatal blow which slavery could receive. . . . We now have the protection of a great and powerful nation at home and abroad." He warned his colleagues that the other cotton states would not come to the aid of South Carolina if she seceded. On the other hand, by united action in a Southern congress, the South could secure its rights and at the same time preserve the Union.³⁵

The speech created a sensation. Perry was proud of it and expressed the wish that it be left as a legacy to his children. He sent copies to President Fillmore, Daniel Webster, Robert Toombs, and other prominent men.³⁶ The day after its delivery he wrote his wife:

Yesterday I got the floor after Colonel Leitner had spoken. As soon as it was known that I had the floor, I saw persons begin to seat themselves; there was some anxiety or curiosity to hear me. It was known that I differed from the other members in regard to my views about the Union. Entire and profound silence prevailed over the House. I had spoken but a very short time before I saw the faces of the members turn pale. They seemed amazed at my boldness, yet felt deeply the force of my argument.

³⁵ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 111-143.

³⁶ Journal, II, December 29, 1850; Daniel Webster to Perry, January 18, 1851, Perry Papers; Millard Fillmore to *idem*, January 18, 1851, *ibid.*; R. Toombs to *idem*, January 27, 1851, *ibid.*

Professor Williams, of the South Carolina College, came to me this morning and said that he gave me his heart as cordially as he did his hand—that he was in ecstasy with my speech, although he did not hear it—his son did. I saw Colonel O'Hanlon sitting with a face beaming with joy, but I have not seen him since. Mr. Middleton said to me this morning that I had amazed the House with my ultraism and *boldness*. I thought so too. The newspapers have all spoken respectfully of my speech, but regret that any one should hold my sentiments. . . .³⁷

Several Unionists in Charleston had ten thousand copies of the speech printed for distribution in South Carolina and Georgia. It was the first check to disunion in the state.³⁸

Upon his return to Greenville, Perry wrote in his Journal:

The Legislature have called a Convention of the State. This is the beginning of a Revolution, or rather an attempt at Revolution. In all the other Southern States they are quiet. But South Carolina alone is disposed to be dissatisfied & overturn the Government. This she cannot do. The whole fuss will end in nothing but the disgrace of the State.³⁹

VI

Because of delay in securing equipment, Perry and Elford were disappointed in their plan to start the *Southern Patriot* in January. Meanwhile agitation was mounting in South Carolina. The radicals were keeping popular excitement at fever heat to swing the state to separate secession at the convention election in February. Quiet reigned in the other Southern states, for the Georgia convention on December 10 had defeated secession by adopting the "Georgia Platform," which endorsed the Compromise as a permanent adjustment of the sectional controversy, but signified the state's determination to resist any future aggression on slavery, "even to a disruption of every tie which binds the state to the Union."⁴⁰

³⁷ *Tribute to Benjamin Franklin Perry*, p. 97.

³⁸ Editorial, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, December 25, 1851; Livingston, *Portraits of Eminent Americans*, II, 592.

³⁹ II, December 29, 1850.

⁴⁰ W. Thompson to Perry, December 5, 19, 1850, Perry Papers; New York *Daily Tribune*, December 18, 1850.

Conservatives could not understand the recklessness with which the Secessionists in South Carolina were rushing on with no hope of aid from other states. Robert Toombs wrote Perry from Washington on January 27:

I read your speech with great pleasure and must express my surprise that sentiments so just, & patriotic should not find greater favour with the people of your state. I must believe that the apparent state of opinion in S. Carolina can not be real. . . .

We are very quiet here. No excitement & no prospect of any. The Free Soilers are as tame as whipped curs. . . .⁴¹

Waddy Thompson also wrote of the favorable situation at the North; the fugitive-slave bill would not be touched, and abolitionism was dying. South Carolina, he said, seemed to be in "a state of lunacy," which only time could cure.⁴² In answer to Perry's request for the names of "such persons in Charleston as have any regard for the Union" to solicit for subscription to his paper, Richard Yeadon replied:

I deeply regret to inform you that it is my thorough conviction that Charleston is wholly alienated from the Union & that a long list of Union-regarding citizens cannot be found within her limits. . . . I firmly believe that no journal could be sustained in Charleston which should advocate acquiescence in the compromise. Our old companions of the Union party are among the most rabid disunionists of the times. There are few persons in the circle of my acquaintance who have any sympathy with my views or feelings on the question of the day.⁴³

Columbia, under the domination of the *Telescope* and *South Carolinian*, seemed intent upon disunion. James O'Hanlon wrote to Perry:

I am my Dear Sir heartily sick of our Columbia papers—The unanimity of the Press on the question of Disunion is to my mind strong evidence of the consummation of a conspiracy which originated in the days of Nullification and has been industriously cherished and kept alive ever since. . . . No opposition or doubts as

⁴¹ January 27, 1851, Perry Papers.

⁴² Thompson to Perry, December 5, 19, 1850, January 13, 1851, *ibid.*

⁴³ January 6, 1850 [1851], *ibid.*

to their views can have a place in their Columns—The letters of Gen. Hamilton and Mr. Poinsette and Mr. Grayson are too offensive to the refined political taste and self sacrificing patriotism of the noble Editors and —, to appear in the *Carolinian & Telegraph*. . . .

But my Dear Sir . . . a goodly number in this District are opening their eyes to the dangerous position the Convention may assume—and could the election be deferred till next fall we might reasonably hope that the State would elect very few Disunionists—I sincerely hope you and the Union ticket may succeed in Greenville—notwithstanding the officious Editors of *Columbia* are uniting against you. . . .⁴⁴

The *Carolinian* was clamoring for the election of separate Secessionists to the convention. "That body, when it shall convene," it said, "must meet for action, and that action must be either *submission or Resistance* to federal power."⁴⁵

VII

The crisis arrived with the convention election on February 10-11. Returns showed an overwhelming majority in favor of separate secession; but the most significant feature was the extremely light vote cast in many districts—only one third or one fourth of the usual number. Thoughtful citizens attributed this to apathy; some said the issue should have been "Convention" or "No Convention." As it was, those opposed to separate secession stayed away from the polls, knowing the futility of resisting the mad tide that had swept the state.⁴⁶ Only in Greenville District was there organized resistance. Here, under the leadership of Perry, the Union candidates—Perry, P. E. Duncan, Thomas P. Brockman, Vardry McBee, and Jesse Senter—conducted an arduous campaign and were rewarded by a decisive victory, winning over their Secessionist opponents nearly three to one. Perry headed the list with a

⁴⁴ January 27, 1851, *ibid*.

⁴⁵ *Columbia Tri-Weekly South Carolinian*, January 10, 1851.

⁴⁶ *New York Daily Tribune*, February 14, 18, 20, 22, 1851; *Greenville Southern Patriot*, February 28, March 28, 1851; W. J. Grayson to Perry, February 17, 1851, Perry Papers; S. Mayrant to *idem*, March 18, 1851, *ibid.*; J. J. Knox to *idem*, February 21, 1851, *ibid.*; J. Rosborough to *idem*, March 5, 1851, *ibid.*; J. M. Rutland to *idem*, March 17, 1851, *ibid.* (Baker Coll.).

vote of 982—about 500 above the highest Secessionist. Greenville was the only district in the state electing Union candidates, but Perry pointed out that many moderates were elected—such men as Barnwell, Cheves, Edward Frost, Huger, A. P. Butler, and Mitchell King.⁴⁷ He calculated that 50 or 60 of the 169 delegates were opposed to separate state action, though the Secessionists set the number at only about 40.⁴⁸

Perry's Unionist friends hastened to congratulate him. Francis Lieber, with whom he had had many congenial conversations the preceding fall, wrote from Columbia:

Te Deum laudamus!

This moment I received your joyful letter, my dear Sir, and it shall go over to Prof Williams at once. You must be doubly rejoiced, for while your victory is a delectable thing to every American that feels and knows the sun to be brighter than a rush light, it puts the seal of "Well done, my servant" by your constituents on your lone but patriotic conduct.⁴⁹

William Grayson wrote:

I have just received your letter of the 13th Inst. and congratulate you on the happy result of the Greenville election. The District stands, like the Angel Abdiel among the first revolting spirits of misrule, "faithful found amid the faithless"! Perhaps it would be more proper to call our people the thoughtless than the faithless. . . .⁵⁰

From O'Neill came the message:

. . . I congratulate you on the prospect of quiet in our State. If we had had one such man as *you* in every district the state would have been saved from the folly of our assembling in Convention. The people only wanted leaders to discuss the subject, and let them hear both sides, and all would have been right.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Journal, II, March 2, 1851; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, February 28, 1851. Horry District in the northeast corner of the state refused to elect delegates; Perry praised its patriotism (Greenville *Southern Patriot*, June 6, 1851).

⁴⁸ Boucher, "Secession and Co-operation Movements in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 116-117; editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, March 28, 1851.

⁴⁹ February 15, 1851, Perry Papers.

⁵⁰ February 17, 1851, *ibid.*

⁵¹ February 17, 1851, *ibid.*

And Poinsett wrote from his home in the black district of Georgetown:

I am much obliged to you for the first intimation I received of the returning good sense of our people. . . .

I hope to be able to return to our mountain homestead early in the spring. We are both heartily sick of this atmosphere so redolent of insane violence. . . . When we meet in the spring we must fall upon some plan of organizing an opposition—There is a strong party in Charleston adverse to violent men & violent measures; but they are frightened into submission—afraid even to exchange opinions with others who think like them lest they should be betrayed. . . .⁵²

⁵² February 26, 1851, *ibid.*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The *Southern Patriot* Triumphs

ON FEBRUARY 28, 1851, after vexatious delays, the *Southern Patriot* made its appearance. It was an attractive journal embellished on the front page with a title scroll and an engraving of various scenes and industries of the town. Underneath were the words: "Devoted to Agriculture, Arts, Commerce, Literature, Manufactures, Science and Politics"; next the motto, "The Rights of the South and the Union of the States."¹

Two thousand copies of the first number were issued, but were not sufficient to supply the demand. By April subscriptions were increasing at the rate of one hundred each week. The paper was so well patronized by Unionists all over the South that in a short time it had a subscription list as large as that of any other journal in the state.² Perry boasted on June 20:

We have a subscription list, which, for numbers, wealth, intelligence and respectability, will compare with any village paper in the Southern States. We doubt whether there is one that equals it in the whole South. Every mail brings us a list of subscribers. . . . Recently we have had several names from the largest slaveholders in South Carolina. Col. James Chesnut, Sen., of Camden, Daniel Blake, Esq., Hon. Ker Boyce, three of the wealthiest men in the State, are amongst them. In Charleston, Columbia, Chester, York, Lancaster, Spartanburg, Abbeville, Sumter and a portion of the Pedee country, we have many of the most prominent men as our

¹ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, February 28, 1851.

² Journal, II, March 2, 1851; editorial, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 11, 1851; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 146, 149.

subscribers. In Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi we have a large number. . . .³

On July 11 he announced that the paper went to five hundred post offices and that every mail was bringing ten to thirty new subscribers, scattered throughout the country, especially the Southwest.⁴

No doubt the launching of the *Southern Patriot* did much to strengthen the cause of the Unionists in other Southern states. Howell Cobb, Unionist candidate for Governor in Georgia, was a subscriber, and so were many of his friends. After the Unionist victory in Mississippi, a subscriber in Jackson wrote to thank the *Southern Patriot* for its efficient aid. "We kept them posted up as to the doings and expectations of South Carolina," says Perry, "and illustrated, in various ways, the folly of the whole disunion movement."⁵

In South Carolina the paper was welcomed by the moderates as a potent means of forwarding the reaction against separate secession which was gradually setting in. Poinsett wrote to Perry: "Of your paper I will only say 'Macte Puer.' It gives general satisfaction to the thinking part of the community."⁶ John N. Williams of Society Hill paid for twenty or thirty subscriptions to be sent to the hottest Secessionists in the Pedee country. Patrons took it upon themselves to secure other subscribers, and sent letters rejoicing that the *Southern Patriot* was lessening the madness of the people. By April a note of hopefulness came from some of the most radical districts.⁷ Petigru wrote: "I firmly believe that our parturient mountain will be delivered of nothing more than a ridiculous abortion."⁸ Brockman, on a visit to Charleston, reported that he had heard volumes in favor of the *Southern Patriot*.⁹ A

³ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, June 20, 1851.

⁴ *Ibid.*, July 11, 1851.

⁵ *Ibid.*, June 13, 1851, March 4, 1852.

⁶ March 28, 1851, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

⁷ John N. Williams to Messrs. Perry & Elford, April 1, 1851, Perry Papers; J. J. Knox to Perry, March 24, 1851, *ibid.*; P. W. Landrum to Messrs. Perry & Elford, May 17, 1851, *ibid.*; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 149-150.

⁸ April 1, 1851, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

⁹ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 18, 1851.

patron from up-country Chester wrote in June: "The people want light and your paper has done much to dispel the darkness."¹⁰

Though the Secessionist newspapers, especially the *Greenville Mountaineer*, *Pendleton Messenger*, and *Columbia Telegraph*, abused the journal severely, Perry ignored them. He was a wiser editor than in his youth and managed to maintain friendly relations with all the leading men of the opposite party.¹¹

II

Since there was no organized Union party in South Carolina, Perry waged his campaign in the *Southern Patriot* under an anti-separate-secession rather than a Unionist banner. His main purpose during the spring and summer of 1851 was to play up the madness of separate secession in order to secure the election in October of conservative delegates to the Southern congress. If the people thus repudiated secession, the convention elected the preceding February would not dare secede. Thoughtful citizens, aware of the reaction in the other cotton states, were ready to assist him. W. W. Boyce wrote:

I hope you will persist & make your Paper as useful as possible. I do not entirely agree with you in your views, if I could I would have a Southern Confederacy, but this is out of the question now, and I am utterly opposed to single isolated secession. . . .

There are I think but a small, a very small minority of Union men proper in the State, but there are a great many opposed to the secession of South Carolina alone at this time . . . our policy should be to show over & over & again & again, by every variety of argument that separate secession is no remedy . . . and if we play well on this cord I think we can effect a great change in public opinion within the State.

If the State secedes it will only be from the timidity of those who are opposed to it. Let us organize a party, have concert of

¹⁰ J. Rosborough to Perry, June 30, 1851, Perry Papers.

¹¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 151-152; Journal, II, March 2, 1851; editorials, *Greenville Southern Patriot*, March 21, May 23, 30, 1851.

action & do everything we can to prevent secession. . . . I will do everything in my power to aid you in your efforts. . . .¹²

Perry vigorously opposed the claim of the *Carolinian* that secession was a "fixed fact" in South Carolina. Pointing to other Southern states, he insisted that South Carolina would be isolated from the South as well as the North if she seceded. Publishing extracts from the letters of William W. Boyce and Bishop William Capers, who had recently returned from the Southwest, he showed that unionism was triumphing there. He described the progress of Foote in his gubernatorial race against Quitman in Mississippi, and of Cobb against McDougal in Georgia. In August he hailed the victory of the Union party in Alabama over Yancey and the radicals.¹³ When the Unionists of Mississippi secured an overwhelming victory in the convention election of September, and Quitman withdrew, Perry wrote an editorial, "The Last Hope of Secession Gone":

There has been a Waterloo defeat in Mississippi. This gallant, high spirited and fiery young Southern State has routed secession throughout her length and breadth, horse foot and dragoons. . . . This looks like dissolving the Union! Three cheers, and three times three cheers thrice repeated for Mississippi.

The whole South is now united, with the exception of South Carolina, and she will be in a short time. . . . The disunionists in South Carolina, *per se*, may hang up their fiddles. It will be a long time before they ever hear their favorite tune played successfully in the United States.¹⁴

Perry announced in an early issue of the *Southern Patriot* that he intended republishing several Union speeches and letters that had not found their way generally into the press of the state. "We shall endeavor to give both sides of this great controversy, and leave the people to judge for themselves," he wrote. Accordingly, he brought out James Hamilton's letter from Texas warning his fellow Carolinians of the reckless course they were pursuing; Grayson's letter to Governor Sea-

¹² March 17, 1851, Perry Papers.

¹³ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, March 7, 14, 28, July 11, 18, August 29, 1851.

¹⁴ September 19, 1851.

brook, which, said Grayson, had been "much more extensively criticized and abused than circulated"; vigorous Unionist articles signed "Suburamus" by Francis Lieber—for he had to appear pseudonymously because of his connection with South Carolina College; Poinsett's letter denying the right of secession and assuring his fellow-citizens that the majority of leaders in the North were disposed to be just to the South. Thus the voices of Carolina's more thoughtful leaders were enabled for the first time to exert a restraining influence on the people as a whole.¹⁵

In answer to a query as to what definite course he would recommend, Perry asserted that the people should assemble in their districts and parishes and instruct their legislative delegations to repeal the convention call. If the convention met, it should take steps to call a Southern congress, where the slaveholding states could draw up a common platform in defense of their rights. Perry wrote in May:

That we are in favor of the Union, under the Compromise, is most certainly true. . . .

But this love for the Union makes us anxious to unite the South, in order to preserve it. . . . We are anxious, therefore, for a Southern Congress, which will secure the rights of the slaveholding States, redress our wrongs, and preserve the Union.¹⁶

At the state convention of the Southern Rights Association in May, a sharp cleavage arose between the conservative and radical Secessionists. Rhett and the radicals, despite earnest protests from Butler, Orr, Barnwell, and Cheves, forced through a resolution in favor of secession with or without the co-operation of other Southern states, recommending such action to the state convention. The conservatives were shocked, and were ready to combine with the Unionists to prevent separate secession. Perry had already risen in arms when Rhett in April had swept the resolution through the Charleston

¹⁵ February 28, March 7, 14, 21, May 23, 30, 1851. See also Rippey, *Joel R. Poinsett*, pp. 239-240; W. Grayson to Perry, May 7, 1851, Perry Papers; F. Lieber to *idem*, February 18, 20, 26, March 2, 1851, *ibid.*

¹⁶ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, May 16, 1851.

Southern Rights Association. At the time, a Charleston member had written him: "Your aid will enable us to create a conservative party."¹⁷

Alert to the situation, Perry wrote an editorial, "Who are urging on the State to Secession?" Not the leaders of the state, the members of Congress (with the exception of Rhett), the old men, or the largest slaveholders, he argued. The most prominent agitators were young men, "panting for fame and military laurels"; some were foreigners; many of the most active owned very few slaves and could not feel the heavy burdens of taxation in South Carolina. Newspaper editors were pre-eminent in South Carolina as fire-eaters and Secessionists.¹⁸

Perry's charge was true. Thenceforth, the secessionist movement of 1850-1852 was in the hands of leaders less well known to the people. Besides Rhett, there was no one of great distinction. Younger men, such as Maxcy Gregg, Congressman W. F. Colcock, and ex-Governor W. B. Seabrook, came to the front. All the prominent leaders—Cheves, Orr, Butler, Barnwell, Memminger—had repudiated separate secession at Charleston; and in so doing had appealed to the conservative, slave-owning classes to follow. Barnwell had made it clear that the end desired by South Carolina was protection of slavery, which would only be further endangered by separate secession. South Carolina must wait until other states were ready to join in forming a Southern confederacy. So stated Orr, and soon afterwards Armistead Burt and others.¹⁹ A week later Perry wrote an editorial showing that the largest slaveholders of the state were not urging secession. He was aiding the co-operationists in aligning the conservative property-owning classes against the radicals:

Mr. Nathaniel Heyward, Col. Wade Hampton, Governor Aiken,

¹⁷ Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina*, pp. 90, 93-100; Charleston *Daily Courier*, May 6, 7, 1851; New York *Daily Tribune*, May 7, 8, 1851; W. Grayson to Perry, May 7, 1851, Perry Papers; James M. Walker to *idem*, April 8 [1851], *ibid*.

¹⁸ April 25, 1851.

¹⁹ Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina*, pp. 92-103, 114; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, p. 118.

Col. William A. Alston, and Col. Williams of Society Hill, are and were the largest slaveholders in South Carolina. Col. Alston and Col. Williams are both subscribers to the *Southern Patriot*, and approve of its course. Col. Hampton was, last winter, very decidedly opposed to any rash or precipitate action, on the part of the State. We have never heard of Gov. Aiken, or Mr. Nathaniel Heyward, in his life-time, urging the State to secession—whilst others, owning two or three negroes, or none at all, have urged the good people of South Carolina every week to secession in defence of slavery!

In Greenville District, Francis H. McLeod, Gen. Waddy Thompson, and Captain Wesley Brooks, are by far the largest slaveholders who reside amongst us. And although their negroes are not in the District, yet they are not the less valuable on that account. Mr. McLeod is with the *Southern Patriot* heart and hand. General Thompson and Captain Brooks are two of its original founders, and utterly opposed to secession.

Capt. Moore, of Sumter, Col. Irby, of Laurens, Col. O'Hanlon, of Richland, Col. Thompson, of Spartanburg, Judge O'Neill, of Newberry, Vardry McBee, Esq., of Greenville, Col. Arthur P. Hayne, of Charleston, Samuel Maverick, of Pendleton, Col. Joseph Grisham, of Pickens, and many others throughout the State, who are numbered amongst the largest slaveholders or wealthiest men in their respective Districts, are all subscribers to the *Southern Patriot*, and opposed to secession. Judge Huger, Judge Frost, Chancellor Dunkin, Judge King, Judge Evans, and Gov. Hammond are unquestionably amongst the largest slaveholders in South Carolina, and they are all understood to be, and so stated in the public prints, opposed to secession. It is literally and entirely true, as we stated, that the largest slaveholders are not urging the State on to secession.²⁰

In a subsequent issue he argued convincingly that slavery was no longer endangered, since the terms of the Compromise were being faithfully executed. Slavery was stronger, more valuable, and more extensive than ever before. Why were Southerners so alarmed for its continuance and security? They should speak of it "as a thing fixed, permanent and unalterable

²⁰ May 16, 1851.

in the United States." It was a blessing on which depended the prosperity and happiness of the nation. As for the agitation that a Southern confederacy was necessary for its safety, he argued:

The Union, dissolved, would not give us one protection for slavery that we have not got now, and it would deprive us of many which are now secured to us by the Constitution.

We should, in such an event, have no guarantee for the delivery of our fugitive slaves. . . . The anti-slavery feeling of all Europe and of all the Northern States would be concentrated and embittered by our separate position and nationality.²¹

Perry welcomed those who had spoken against separate secession at the convention of the Southern Rights Association as allies in the ranks of the "anti-secession party in South Carolina." Though several had been leading Secessionists the preceding fall, Perry announced that past differences would not prevent their battling together on practical issues.²² As Francis Lieber confidentially wrote him:

Although the old gentleman [Cheves] is always fierce against the Union, and although, no doubt, the old necromancer has done his best to bring on all this storm and there is some inconsistency in these letters and the speech at Nashville, yet it is not for us to point it out, and his anti-secessionist letters *tell*. . . . one must not be over dainty in politics in stormy times like this.²³

The conservatives of Charleston, at the call of 1200 citizens, formally launched the "Co-operation" party on July 29. They adopted resolutions favoring a Southern confederacy, but opposing the separate secession of South Carolina, and determining upon concerted action with the other slave states to devise some plan of resistance to the aggressions of the Federal Government. Barnwell and A. P. Butler spoke eloquently against separate state action, and letters were read from Cheves, Orr, and James Chesnut. Perry hailed the meeting in spirited head-

²¹ June 20, 1851.

²² June 6, 1851.

²³ June 1, 1851, Perry Papers.

lines: "Glorious News! Charleston speaking in her strength against the Ruin of the State!" The Co-operation and Union parties were allies, he said, to save the state; the editors of the *Southern Patriot* had always been in favor of Southern co-operation and a Southern congress—"not to dissolve the Union and form a Southern confederacy, but to defend the constitutional rights of the South, protect the institution of slavery, and preserve the Federal Union."²⁴

As conservative sentiment developed, several Co-operationist newspapers arose to oppose the separate secession of South Carolina. Perry welcomed them all: "The *Southern Patriot* is getting allies, and although there may be shades of difference in our politics, we will all fight under the Anti-Secession Banner—a banner under which have rallied Cheves, Butler, Barnwell, and many others of the most prominent disunionists of the South." First came the *Hamburg Republican* in April, then the *Columbia Commercial Transcript* in May. In June Perry announced that the *Charleston Evening News* was "exposing the fatal consequences of secession to the commerce of South Carolina, with an ability which cannot be surpassed." July found another Co-operationist paper in Charleston, the *Southern Standard*. In September, Perry rejoiced that one had risen in Anderson, the *Southern Rights Advocate*, "out of the ashes of the Pendleton *Messenger*."²⁵

Perry turned his "editorial battery" against the radical press with telling effect in September:

When we look at the secession newspapers in South Carolina, and read the intense and burning Carolina feeling which some of them contain, we would naturally suppose that the editors were Carolinians by birth. . . .

But how great must be the astonishment of everyone when he ascertains that some of these intensely Carolina editors are Yankees, Irishmen and Englishmen. . . .

²⁴ Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina*, pp. 106-110; *Greenville Southern Patriot*, August 8, 1851.

²⁵ *Greenville Southern Patriot*, May 30, April 25, June 13, July 11, September 26, 1851.

He proceeded to name Clapp of the *Mercury*, a Northerner; Johnson of the *Columbia Carolinian*, a native of Ireland, who was assisted by Mr. Cavis of the North; King and Willington, Northerners, part owners and editors of the *Charleston Courier*. In a following issue he added Mr. Whitaker, a native Bostonian, editor of the *Columbia Palmetto Banner*, to the list; also another of the *Mercury* editors, Mr. Heart from the North. It was remarkable, he said, that the four leading journals in South Carolina, at the capital and the metropolis of the state, all urging separate secession, should be edited and controlled by foreigners and Yankees.

We protest, as native Carolinians, against our State and our Union, our government, and our country being broken up and destroyed, dishonored and disgraced by foreigners and Yankees.

If South Carolina must be offered up as a sacrifice at the shrine of folly and madness, let it be done by the hands of her own native born sons. They alone have the right to bring the victim to the temple. . . .²⁶

III

To nonslaveholders of the up country the *Southern Patriot* appealed with a series of articles attacking the unfair domination of the state government by the Secessionist planters of the low-country parishes. In an editorial entitled "Evils at Home to be Remedied," Perry strongly suggested that the agitators should reform the oligarchic state government instead of attacking the Union. The state convention should amend

²⁶ September 5, 19, 1851. Perry's charge that the radical editors were Northerners or foreigners was true only in a limited degree. A. S. Willington had come from Massachusetts, as a young printer, to help found the *Courier* in 1803, and had been associated with it ever since—in latter years as proprietor and editor. William S. King, "a modest artizan" of twenty from New York, had joined the *Courier* in 1833 as journeyman compositor and had risen to the position of business manager and editor. John Milton Clapp from Ohio, a graduate of Yale and "a writer of classical taste and culture," had resided at Beaufort before being called (about 1850) to become associate editor of the *Mercury*. John H. Heart of Philadelphia had edited Calhoun organs in Washington before becoming one of the editors and joint proprietors of the *Mercury* shortly before 1849. These editors, therefore, did not represent the slave-owning interests of the state, but certainly the two former had long been identified with its business interests (William L. King, *The Newspaper Press of Charleston, S. C.*, Charleston, 1872, pp. 90-127, 134-139, 152-154).

the constitution to give equality of representation and popular elections. In this he was aided by articles from Benjamin F. Pepon, of Charleston, who saw the necessity of aligning the populous up country with Charleston if secession were to be defeated.²⁷

As spring advanced Perry urged the people to hold public meetings in opposition to separate state secession. Hamburg was the first to respond early in June. Greenville held an "Anti-Secession Meeting" on July 4, at which letters against separate secession were read from Francis Lieber, William Gregg, Preston S. Brooks, James Chesnut, and James L. Orr. Resolutions by Perry were adopted recommending that anti-secession meetings be held throughout the state, instructing Greenville's representatives to vote against calling the state convention, and, if it assembled, instructing them to vote against secession and try to secure popular elections and reform in representation. He showed that slavery was a powerful factor in the conservatism of the district:

Southern people will defend the institution of African slavery at all hazards, to the last extremity. Separate state secession would weaken & destroy the institution of slavery & involve the country in civil war & ruinous taxation. S. C. must look to co-operation of other slaveholding states for protection of its rights.²⁸

During the ensuing months anti-separate-secession meetings were held in every district and most of the parishes. Perry addressed the one at Cashville in Spartanburg District on September 20, urging the voters to recover the government from the "politicians and newspaper editors." He spoke of the strong bond of affection that bound the people of the Union together, and of the fatal blow to slavery that would be struck by its dissolution. South Carolina had no right to secede and would not be permitted by the other states to violate the compact and withdraw peaceably; war and ruin would result. He adjured his hearers to consider well the consequences of so

²⁷ May 2, 9, 1851; Benjamin F. Pepon to Perry, April 22, 27, 1851, Perry Papers.

²⁸ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, May 13, July 11, 18, 25, 1851.

fatal an act. "Are you not happy, fellow citizens? Are you not prosperous?" he asked. "Let us continue united in the same great and glorious republic."²⁹ At a "Great Southern Co-operation and Anti-Secession Meeting" at Hibernian Hall in Charleston on September 23, Memminger, whom the Secessionists had claimed since his address at Greenville the preceding fall, denied that he belonged to that party, and made a strong plea for co-operation in a speech which was greeted with rapturous applause.³⁰

As the October election approached, Perry reminded the voters that they had been "tricked into a revolution" by the precipitate convention election of the preceding February; now a convention elected by one fourth of the voters claimed to represent the sentiment of the state. Let them show by electing Co-operation candidates to the Southern congress that the legislature and convention did not represent the state. "The State Convention cannot and dare not secede with a majority of the people of South Carolina opposed to secession."³¹

The Co-operation and Secession parties each ran two candidates for the Southern congress in every congressional district. Unionists endorsed the Co-operation ticket; in Greenville, J. H. Irby and Orr, both Co-operationists, were the nominees. Perry, when solicited to become a candidate, declined "in order to produce no division in the anti-secession ranks." He urged every man opposed to the secession of South Carolina to vote for Irby and Orr. When the Pendleton *Messenger*, attempting to break the ranks of the Co-operation party, cautioned the Unionists against voting for men with such political principles, Perry answered:

In voting for Colonels Irby and Orr for the Southern Congress, as the Union party will do to a man, they are acting on principles, with a view of showing the anti-secession strength of the State, and preserving the State from ruin and dishonor.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, September 26, October 2, 1851.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, October 16, 1851; Henry D. Capers, *The Life and Times of C. G. Memminger* (Richmond, 1893), pp. 204-222.

³¹ *Greenville Southern Patriot*, September 5, 1851.

In this effort to save the State, Colonels Irby and Orr are acting in good faith with the Union Party. Both the co-operation party and the Union Party, are alike devoted to the honor and welfare of South Carolina. In regard to the preservation of the Union, they differ, but in the language of a friend in York District, it is time enough for them to separate when their road forks.³²

The election returns showed the largest vote polled in the state for years; the Co-operationists won by 25,045 to 17,710, carrying every congressional district except Rhett's. The *Southern Patriot* rejoiced: "In the mountains, in the middle country, and on the seaboard, at the capital of the State, and in our great commercial metropolis, with the poor and with the rich, everywhere and with all classes, the secessionists have been defeated, horse, foot and dragoons." The vote showed an overwhelming opposition to separate secession in the up country, where the majority of the population was white, and in Charleston, with its large business and mercantile interests. Only in the parishes of the low country and the black districts of the middle country did the Secessionists win. Perry congratulated the uplands on their noble showing. His native district, Pickens, had defeated the Secessionists 1411 to 152. Greenville, which had given the Secessionists 600 votes in the February convention election, had now conceded them only 237, with 1502 for the Co-operationists. Horry was the banner district with a victory of 734 to 12 for the Co-operationists.³³

IV

But the victory had not been won under the flag of the Union. The Secessionists now called upon the Co-operationists to redeem their pledge of co-operative secession or admit that their platform meant only co-operation with the other Southern states in submission.³⁴ But Perry thus warned his allies:

³² *Ibid.*, September 12, 1851.

³³ New York *Tribune*, October 17, 25, 1851; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, October 23, 1851; Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina*, pp. 123-124.

³⁴ Boucher, "Secession and Co-operation Movements in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, p. 127.

We have now a word to say to the co-operation leaders who profess to be disunionists, and in favor of a Southern Confederacy. The people of South Carolina desire repose, and must have it. The recent election *was an anti-secession, and not a co-operation, victory*. The people voted against secession, and not in favor of co-operation. They knew that all hope of co-operation for past grievances was at an end, and so declared by the elections in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. . . .³⁵

During the legislative session in Columbia, the Co-operationists held a caucus to decide what policy to pursue, but could not agree. Perry had very little patience with them: "The position of the co-operationists does not admit the structure of any platform on which wise and spirited men would like to stand." But the Secessionists forced the issue by introducing a bill to convoke the convention on the fourth Monday in April, which, despite the valiant opposition of the Co-operationists, was pushed through on December 10. Perry wrote from Columbia:

It is strange, passing strange, what this body should be convened for at this time. Not for secession, because the people of South Carolina have declared against it, and the Convention dare not secede. It is not needed to ratify the proceedings of the Southern Congress, because that assembly will never convene.³⁶

During the months intervening before the convention assembled, he suggested that it take up a constructive program instead of blustering and threatening at the United States as South Carolina usually did. It should adopt a platform like that of Georgia, "broad enough for the whole South to stand on," acquiescing in the Compromise, and expressing its readiness to co-operate with the other slaveholding states in defending their institutions and equal rights in the Union.³⁷

V

At the conclusion of the first year of the *Southern Patriot* on February 19, 1852, Perry announced that the stockholders

³⁵ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, November 6, 1851.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, December 4, 11, 1851.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, January 8, February 12, April 15, 1852.

had transferred the establishment to Elford as sole proprietor and continued him as editor. The paper had made expenses, but at the low subscription rate of three dollars per annum cleared nothing. Elford was to pay Perry a salary of \$500 for the ensuing year.³⁸ Of the accomplishment of the *Southern Patriot*, Perry wrote:

It has now lived through the night and the storm for one year, and day is beginning to break and the elements are once more becoming calm—secession is dead, utterly dead, and odious in its death, the rights of the South are triumphant, and the Union safe. What agency the establishment of the *Southern Patriot* may have had on the action of public sentiment in South Carolina, we leave for others to decide.³⁹

VI

The climax of the fiasco of South Carolina secession was reached when the state convention, elected fourteen months before, assembled in Columbia on April 26. The Greenville delegates were the only Unionists among them. The Co-operationists, fearing that the Secessionist majority would yet attempt some reckless action, were anxious to adjourn as soon as possible. The Secessionists, however, still hoped to obtain an agreement upon some form of resistance short of secession. Rhett came to Columbia several days before the opening of the convention to marshal his demoralized party for action.

A Committee of Twenty-one was appointed to consider and report on the action the convention should take. Perry was one of the members, along with twelve Co-operationists and eight Secessionists. He found "great harmony and good feeling" in the Committee, but no disposition to do anything more than assert the right of secession and give an excuse to the world for not exercising it at that time. When Perry tried to interest them in democratic reform of the state constitution, they decided, contrary to his opinion, that the convention had no right to alter the constitution. Since he had always denied

³⁸ Journal, II, February 29, 1852.

³⁹ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, February 19, 1852.

the right of peaceable secession, Perry would not agree to the resolutions adopted by the Committee and drew up his own to submit as a minority of one.⁴⁰

On the following day Langdon Cheves read the Committee report, which asserted emphatically the right of South Carolina to secede from the Federal Government, stated that the violations of the Constitution and rights of the states by the Federal Government, "especially in relation to slavery," amply justified her in such action, and explained that she forbore the exercise of this right "from considerations of expediency only."

Perry then read his minority report, which differed from the majority report in several important particulars. In the preamble he gave South Carolina's reasons for taking no immediate action. In the first place, the other Southern states had declined meeting her in a Southern congress, and it would be unwise and imprudent for her to take "any decisive separate action in a cause which equally belongs to them all." Second, the Federal Government and Northern people had recently indicated that they would cease their aggressions on the institutions of the South. In the third place, a "deep-rooted and long-cherished regard for the Union of these States . . . makes it right and proper, honorable and patriotic that we should 'suffer while evils are sufferable.'" In his resolutions Perry claimed, not the right of secession, but only that of revolution—the right of a free people "to alter or abolish" their government when it becomes destructive of the ends for which it was instituted." He also took a strong stand in defense of slavery, upholding it as "a great blessing to the African race and absolutely necessary for the continued peace and prosperity of the slave-holding States," and offering South Carolina's pledge to resist, in company with her sister Southern states, "or alone if need be," any attempt on the part of Congress to interfere with it.

⁴⁰ Editorial Correspondence, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 29, May 6, 1852; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, p. 130; *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1852, p. 13.

The extreme Secessionists were likewise displeased with the "futile gesture" embodied in the Report of the Committee of Twenty-one, and Maxcy Gregg offered a separate report. The convention, however, accepted the majority document by a vote of 136 to 19.⁴¹

Rhett, feeling that his party had rejected his leadership, sent his resignation as United States senator to Governor Means.⁴² Perry thus commented on his action in the *Southern Patriot*:

I think this is the brightest feather in his cap, and evinces the true spirit of a chevalier and patriot. He has honestly and zealously tried to break up the Union, and the people and Convention have decided against him. Now, he says to them, you have no further use for my services. Select some one who will carry out your submission and Union doctrines. . . . Though I totally differ from the truth of Mr. Rhett's premises, yet I admire his noble and patriotic, disinterested and spirited conclusion.⁴³

Rhett reciprocated this admiration. After Perry's minority report, he said to him: "You have put to the blush both Secessionists and Co-operationists, in the firm and manly position you have taken."⁴⁴

VII

On the last day of the convention, Perry wrote from Columbia: "It is admitted on all sides that the political principles of the Southern Patriot are now triumphant. The Union is safe, the compromise acquiesced in, and peace restored to our State. Col. W. C. Preston said the other day, to a friend of ours, that the course of the Patriot had been like 'the steady tramp of a Roman Legion.'"⁴⁵

As a further means of restoring South Carolina to cordial relationship with her sister states, both North and South, Perry urged that she take an interest in the presidential election and

⁴¹ South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1852, pp. 15, 18-19, 23-26.

⁴² White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 132-133.

⁴³ Editorial Correspondence, Greenville *Southern Patriot*, May 6, 1852.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

send delegates to the Democratic national convention in June. Her voice might determine the nominee and advance the cause of Southern institutions; it was "all nonsense for S. C. to be playing this game of Chinese exclusion." When Pierce was nominated in June, Perry hailed him as a state rights Democrat, opposed to the tariff, internal improvements, national bank, and to all slavery agitation. He urged Greenville to hold a ratification meeting on July 5. "We will show the world that we want another President of the *United States of America* . . . a man . . . in favor of 'The Rights of the South, and the Union of the States.'" The Greenville meeting was enthusiastically attended, and resolutions were adopted endorsing the nominees and platform of the Democratic party—especially acquiescence in the Compromise as a *final* settlement of the slavery agitation. Perry spoke for the resolutions and congratulated the people of Greenville on the union of all parties, "secessionists and co-operationists, Union men and disunion men, whigs and democrats," for the ratification of Pierce, who "knew no North, no South, no East, no West—nothing but the Constitution and the Union."⁴⁶

Factional strife had finally subsided in South Carolina, and the party divisions of 1851 were disappearing. Perry reported in an editorial on the New Year: "We are once more at peace with the Federal Government and amongst ourselves, and with 'the rest of mankind.'"⁴⁷ The spirit of reconciliation had even penetrated the radical parishes, according to a letter from William Grayson to Perry:

We are in a State of comfortable quietude in our low Country parishes, which contrasts very happily with the fuss and fury of the last two or three summers. The Secession men are taking a long breath, and are, I have no doubt, in their secret hearts, rejoiced at escaping the crime of destroying the happiest government and the best that the world has ever known, though they are not quite willing to confess their delusions.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, January 22, 29, March 4, 18, April 8, June 17, July 8, 15, 1852.

⁴⁷ January 6, 1853.

⁴⁸ July 30, 1852, Perry Papers.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Hush before the Storm

FROM 1852 to 1860 secessionism was submerged in South Carolina. Separate secession had been defeated, and though the state had overwhelmingly endorsed co-operative secession, there was no hope of its immediate attainment. The other Southern states had accepted the Georgia platform, pledging loyalty to the Union so long as the terms of the Compromise were faithfully executed, but expressing a determination to resist any future aggressions against slavery at any cost. Only a dire threat to slavery would rally them to the secessionist cause. The radicals of South Carolina ceaselessly sought such a means; but conservatives urged the state to align itself with the rest of the South, considering slavery safe within the Union under the terms of the Compromise. Perry proclaimed the power of a united South to preserve its institutions unmolested if allied with the Democratic party of the North.

Orr was the leader of the conservatives. Extremely popular in Congress, he deplored the isolationist policy of his colleagues and, like Perry, was convinced that the salvation of the South lay in full participation in the councils of the Democratic party. He had led some of the Co-operationists in support of Pierce's election and cautiously built up the party disdainfully called "National Democrat" by the *Mercury*.¹ Perry had praised him in the *Patriot* for "throwing off that terrapin notion of living within one's own shell, which has been so popular in South Carolina." But when he was nominated for

¹ Laura A. White, "The National Democrats in South Carolina, 1852 to 1860," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXVIII (October, 1929), 370-372; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 133-141.

Speaker in 1853, the South Carolina delegation absented themselves as usual from the Democratic caucus and caused his defeat. "When will our state see the folly and absurdity of this transcendental isolation?" he asked Perry.²

There was an "amiable truce" of parties in South Carolina for several years. The Secessionists saw the advisability of restoring harmony within the state. Many of the most ardent, said Perry, became subscribers to the *Patriot*, admitting that its principles had triumphed in the state. Attending the Court of Appeals in Columbia in May, 1853, Perry wrote exultantly that both Secessionists and Co-operationists acknowledged "that all parties were now merged in the Union party!"³

So confident was he of the good faith of the Democratic administration in maintaining the principles of the Compromise that he staunchly defended Pierce when assailed for removing competent Unionists, such as William Grayson, from office in favor of rabid Secessionists and Abolitionists.⁴ The Union men were not complaining, he said. "Is he not still 'a Union man and a Compromise man?' If he can win over to the Union and to the Compromise 'the bitter and sworn enemies of both,' does he not deserve the gratitude of his party and his country, instead of their curses and maledictions?"⁵

Perry attributed the increased prosperity of South Carolina to the quietude in politics that pervaded the South. Land and slaves had increased in value enormously, contrary to the claim of Secessionists that Negroes would not be worth having if the Union were not dissolved.⁶ He described the industrial transformation in a New Year editorial in 1854:

Health pervades our country, and abundance is treasured up in every part of it. Provisions are cheap, and our staple commodities

² Greenville *Southern Patriot*, March 3, 10, September 29, 1853.

³ Chauncey S. Boucher, "South Carolina and the South on the Eve of Secession, 1852 to 1860," *Washington University Studies*, Humanistic Series, VI (April, 1919), 85-86; R. B. Boylston to Perry, October 14, 1853, Perry Papers; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, February 17, May 19, 1853.

⁴ J. B. O'Neill to Perry, March 17, 1853, Perry Papers; James I. McCarter to *idem*, March 17, 1853, *ibid.*; R. Yeadon to *idem*, June 25, 1853, *ibid.*

⁵ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, June 30, 1853.

⁶ *Ibid.*, January 13, February 10, 1853.

bearing a fine price. Labor is in demand, and the spirit of improvement every where to be seen. Thank God, our energies are no longer wasted on a fruitless wrangle over Federal politics. The state is now beginning to feel her strength, and pursue her true interest. Nothing languishes within her borders, but idle and useless political excitement, and the worthless drones who live and flourish in such excitement. The mercantile interests of the country are prospering as they never did before. Manufactories are springing up and being sustained, in every part of the State. Public improvements are going on every where, and in every way. Railroads are making an iron web over the whole State. Towns and villages are being built up, and are spreading out as they never did before in South Carolina. The farmer and planter are beginning to consider themselves permanent residents of the State, and are actually thinking about improving their lands and building fine houses. Such are the prospects under which the year is ushered in. May they grow brighter and happier every day till its end!⁷

When the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed, Perry was more than ever convinced that the rights of the South were safe within the Union. He rejoiced that the Missouri restriction had been repealed and that noninterference by Congress with slavery was now an established principle. "There is, as we have always contended, a sense of justice at the North, and a patriotic feeling at the North, sufficient to preserve this great and glorious Confederacy," he wrote. Along with many in the South, he was eager to reward Douglas with the Democratic nomination for President.⁸ Orr was fully in accord with Perry in his view of Douglas and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. "Slavery, State Rights & the rights of the South are stronger today than they ever were at any preceding time," he wrote.⁹ Perry was delighted with his breadth of vision, and wrote editorially of his Fourth of July oration in Philadelphia: "Instead of being a mere partizan, inculcating local and sectional prejudices, Col. Orr has shown himself a statesman worthy of the better days of South Carolina." Speeches to his constituents

⁷ January 5, 1854.

⁸ *Ibid.*, June 1, 8, 1854.

⁹ James L. Orr to Perry, March 6, 1854, Perry Papers.

in the fall showed Orr in harmony with Perry, not only in his National Democracy, but also in his advocacy of democratic state reform.¹⁰

In August, 1855, Orr formally launched his campaign for participation by South Carolina in the national Democratic convention at Cincinnati the following June. Speaking at a series of public dinners given him at Anderson, Pickens, and other towns in the congressional district, Orr declared that the South, since the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, was in a securer position with the Federal Government than it had ever been and should staunchly uphold Pierce's administration and the great Democratic party of the Union. He denounced attempts being made to form a Southern sectional party and scathingly attacked the Know-Nothings as originating with the Abolitionists and fanatics of the North. The next nominee of the Democratic party would be sound to the core on all Southern measures.¹¹

Perry supported Orr staunchly in the columns of the *Patriot*. "There is something childish, too much so for grown men to countenance, in the idea of keeping aloof from Presidential nominations," he wrote. At the legislative session in the fall he led the movement for participation by South Carolina in the Cincinnati convention, drawing up a paper, which was signed by forty-eight members, requesting those in favor of the proposal to meet at their respective courthouses in March and appoint delegates to convene in Columbia the first Monday in May to make arrangements.¹²

While Perry and Orr were steadily building up the National Democrats in South Carolina, the disunionists were seeking every means to thwart them. Knowing that an open appeal to secession would no longer avail, they sought their object by subterfuge. L. W. Spratt, editor of the Charleston *Daily Standard*, launched a campaign in 1853 for revival of the slave trade, hoping to unite nonslaveholders with slaveholders in a

¹⁰ Greenville *Southern Patriot* July 27, August 24, 31, September 28, 1854.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, August 9, 16, September 13, October 25, 1855.

¹² November 1, December 27, 1855.

demand for a Southern confederacy. Perry indignantly exposed his motive:

We have known, for some time past, that there was a disposition, on the part of the disunionists in South Carolina, and perhaps in some of the other Southern States, to agitate the repeal of the laws of Congress prohibiting the importation of African slaves into the United States, for the purpose of arraying the South against the North, on a question which they know there is no hope of carrying. Their object is to agitate, excite and unite the South on this question, and then point to a dissolution of the Union, as the only means of accomplishing their purpose. . . . The North has an immovable majority against repealing the laws of Congress declaring this slave trade piracy, and punishing with death, as felons and pirates, all who engage in it. The whole civilized world are with them, too, and have declared the trade piracy, and done much to suppress it. We think, too, that nine-tenths of the Southern people would revolt at any such legislation. Instead of being a benefit and a blessing to the South, it would be the most unmitigated curse that could be inflicted on this section of the country. . . .

. . . It would immediately diminish the value of all the slaves in the Southern States from one-half to two-thirds of their present prices. This would be a loss to the present slaveholders. . . . This is not all. Such an addition to slavery would diminish the value of labor in South Carolina to that extent. This loss would fall on the poor white laborers and mechanics, and farmers of the State. Their labor is their capital, and as their labor is depreciated their capital is diminished in value. It is nonsense to talk about a poor man's being able to purchase slaves if they were cheaper, when his labor is cheapened, too, by the same operation, and it is only by his labor that he can purchase. . . . We have not fertile lands enough to employ, profitably, the labor which we already have in South Carolina. It has to seek a home elsewhere, and has sought a home elsewhere for the last thirty years. . . .

But this is not all. At present we have in South Carolina two hundred and fifty thousand civilized and peaceable slaves, happy and contented in their slavery, attached to their masters and families, and likely to remain so in all time to come. What would be the consequence of throwing into their midst, as companions and associates, an equal number of wild and licentious savages. . . ?

There is no doubt at all that the condition of the African race is very much benefited by its transfer to the United States. But will that justify a civilized and Christian people in making the transfer. . . . The United States had the honor of first declaring this nefarious traffic piracy, and they will never have the disgrace and ignominy of reopening or restoring it. . . .¹³

Spratt continued his propaganda, publishing pamphlets to foment disunion; and Governor J. H. Adams in his Annual Message of 1856 recommended reopening of the slave trade. Though a warm personal friend of Adams and an admirer of his manly virtues, Perry felt a deep revulsion. But the issue proved distracting rather than unifying. Orr, like Perry in regarding it a godsend to the Abolitionists, introduced a well-timed resolution in Congress against it. Rhett and the *Mercury* soon turned from its advocacy. Though an attempt was made to push through the measure at the Southern commercial conventions, it was steadily rejected until 1859, when disunionists dominated the meeting.¹⁴

In 1855 the Secessionists made another futile attempt to combat the National Democrats by organizing the Know-Nothing party in the state. Perry conducted a scathing campaign against them as the greatest humbugs of the age, exploiters of religious and antforeign prejudices; nothing could be more inconsistent with the American spirit than their doctrines of "intolerance and persecution."¹⁵

Early in January, 1856, the paper signed by the forty-eight legislators recommending representation in the Democratic national convention was published widely over the state. Perry appealed earnestly for popular endorsement of the movement. Stressing the fact that the Northern Democrats were "firm, sound and sanguine" on the slavery question, and that a united

¹³ *Ibid.*, October 12, 1854.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, August 16, 1855, December 21, 1854; Greenville *Patriot and Mountainer*, December 25, 1856; Autobiography, 1874, p. 44; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 140-141; Van Deusen, *Economic Bases of Disunion in South Carolina*, pp. 308-311.

¹⁵ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, April 5, 19, May 31, June 21, August 16, 23, November 15, 1855.

South allied with them could maintain control of the Federal Government, he urged public meetings in every district of the state to send delegates to Columbia. Pierce's Kansas Message he quoted as convincing proof of the fidelity of the Northern Democracy to the Constitution and rights of the states.¹⁶

By February a majority of the newspapers and many of the leading citizens of the state were favoring the movement, but politicians of the oligarchic clique that had been in control were denouncing it furiously. W. H. Gist of Union attempted to prejudice the voters against it by announcing that it had originated with "Maj. B. F. Perry, a name familiarly known to all of them, and one which they would not be willing to inscribe on a resistance banner." Perry turned hotly upon his accuser. The "ungenerous attempt to prejudice the public mind against a wise and popular measure, because it originated with one whose misfortune it has been to stand firmly, all his life, in a minority in South Carolina" was "unworthy of the man, his position, and the good sense of his constituency."

It is not true, however, that we are the author of this movement. It originated with Col. Orr, the distinguished Representative in Congress, of the very constituents whom Col. Gist was addressing! . . . Why did not Col. Gist tell them this? Was he afraid that Col. Orr's name would give popularity to a measure which ours would prejudice? . . .

. . . But this much we can tell Col. Gist, that *the very platform* on which we have always stood, and which we have defended for the last twenty-five years, which we submitted to the State Convention of South Carolina in 1851, and which was published with their proceedings, and spread all over the State and the Union, is the same identical platform, in every particular, that was adopted in Georgia, and on which the whole South is now urged to rally by South Carolina herself!

Other attackers attempted to counteract Perry's popular appeal by denouncing him as a demagogue, red republican, and leveller. Perry replied:

We do believe in the right of the people to govern themselves; nor

¹⁶ *Greenville Patriot and Mountaineer*, January 3, 10, 17, 24, 1856.

have we any sympathy with those who teach a different doctrine. The fact is so, and cannot be denied, that there are, at this time, two antagonistic principles in South Carolina, contending against each other—the one an aristocratic principle, as old as the colonization of the State . . . the other, a Democratic principle, which has contended for the power of the people, for the equality of the people, for their education and elevation, the reward of merit and talent. In every other State in the Union, except South Carolina, the aristocratic principle has yielded and given way to the Democratic principle. This has infused into the government of every other State more of energy, vigor, improvement and prosperity, than we can see in South Carolina. Although one of the richest States in the Union, South Carolina has the mortification of seeing herself outstripped by all her sister States!

The day is not far distant when these two principles will join issue, and that old aristocratic principle will be utterly powerless to suppress the voice of the people.¹⁷

The convention movement gathered momentum, and on sales day in March nearly every district in the state selected delegates to go to Columbia. Perry wrote editorially:

The ball rolls on gloriously, and the "Immortal Forty-Eight" will see their efforts crowned with entire success. The next October elections will let the politicians know that the people have no further use for those who do not believe in the capacity of the people to govern themselves, and vote for a Chief Magistrate of the Republic.¹⁸

The convention in Columbia on May 5-6 was a great success. More than a hundred delegates were present, representing twenty-three districts. Orr and Francis W. Pickens of Edgefield, who had formally joined the National Democrats in 1854, made the key speeches of the convention, giving masterly arguments for participation in the Cincinnati convention. Perry wrote triumphantly from Columbia:

This is a new era in the politics of South Carolina. Under the lead of Young America, the State has been wheeled into line, and

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, February 7, 1856.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, March 20, 1856.

now marches with the great National Democratic party, to do battle in defence of the South, the Constitution, the rights of the States and the Union of the States. The old fogies and that cliquism which has controlled the State for their own personal aggrandizement so long, have been turned down. Young Carolina is now in the lead and will fight for the rights of the people. The next issue, after carrying the ensuing Presidential election, will be to give the election of President to the people, and place the people on an equality with the citizens of the other States.¹⁹

When Buchanan received the nomination at Cincinnati, Perry immediately endorsed him as safe on the subject of slavery, though, along with the rest of the state, he would have preferred Pierce or Douglas.²⁰ Democratic victory in the October elections strengthened his confidence in the stability of the Union:

There will be plain and easy sailing for the next four years, with a Democratic President, a Democratic Senate and a Democratic House of Representatives. . . . The Northern Democracy have now passed through the fiery furnace of abolitionism, and are reliable in all great political issues. . . . The South ought to cherish and stand by the Northern Democracy. They have always been our friends, from the foundation of the Government to the present time. . . .²¹

When the new Republican party, with its hated platform proclaiming it the duty of Congress to prohibit slavery in the territories, was defeated, Perry wrote: "The agony is over—the Union is safe, and the South triumphant. Black Republicanism, under the lead of a Southern renegade, is crushed, and the broad, bright banner of Democracy waves victoriously over the North and the South, the East and the West. . . ."²²

On the New Year Perry expressed supreme optimism over the political outlook:

Slavery is shown to be, this day, stronger in the South and in the

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, May 8, 15, 1856.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, May 29, June 12, 1856; Boucher, "South Carolina and the South on the Eve of Secession, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

²¹ *Greenville Patriot and Mountaineer*, October 30, 1856.

²² *Ibid.*, November 13, 1856.

North than it ever was before since the organization of the Government. The great battle has been fought and won. . . . The great wish of Mr. Calhoun, expressed to us a few years before his death, to see the South united and at the head of the Government, with enough of the Northern States to give her the power to carry on its operations, has been realized in its fullest extent. . . . If the past unrivalled growth, prosperity, power, wealth and grandeur of the American Republic is not enough to satisfy us as to the future, nothing can. . . .²³

At the opening of Congress in 1857, the South triumphed when Orr was elected Speaker of the House. South Carolina's repudiation of isolation was complete. Not only the National Democrats but many former Secessionists were now confident of the security of the South within the Union. Only a small radical group under Rhett and Maxcy Gregg still harbored the old idea that the slaveholding states must set up a separate confederacy or be ruined. When the legislature chose a successor to Senator Butler in the fall, the National Democrats were not strong enough to elect their candidate, Francis W. Pickens, but the Secessionists could muster only six votes for Rhett. Hammond, who had held aloof from party factions since 1850, was chosen. Though a confirmed disunionist who had desired a Southern confederacy for many years, he had repudiated separate secession and refused to take any action without a united South.²⁴

Just before leaving for Washington, when the attempt to admit Kansas under the Lecompton constitution was arousing bitter sectional animosity, Hammond sought Perry's advice:

From the whole of your remarks in the Mountaineer on the Senatorial Election, I have come to the conclusion that although you opposed my election you would cheerfully support me in a course of action that would accord with your views as to what was best for our State & the South.

■ *Ibid.*, January 15, 1857.

²⁴ Boucher, "South Carolina and the South on the Eve of Secession, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, p. 117; White, "The National Democrats in South Carolina, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, p. 379; Merritt, *James Henry Hammond*, pp. 96-115; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, December 3, 10, 1857.

From what I know of you personally & otherwise, I do not doubt, that if ever the time arrives that you think the South & Southern Institutions—(i.e. slavery), are endangered by Northern & anti-slavery aggression, *actually & practically*, you will show yourself a thorough Southern man “born to the manor.” I therefore venture to write to *you*—(*not to your paper nor for print*) very frankly in the hope of eliciting equal confidence from you.

A month ago—at the time of my election I thought the South was in a more safe & honorable position in the Union & the opinion of the World than it had ever been in my time. . . .

. . . But from what has occurred since the opening of the Session of Congress, it does seem to me—at this distance—that it *may* be, that the *final & decisive* Crisis is close at hand which is to settle the destiny of the Slaveholders of the South *forever*.

Under these circumstances I solicit your confidential opinions of affairs & beg you will confide in me so far as to write to me at Washington, what you really think on each phase of Affairs as it comes up. Shall the South make the Lecompton Constitution an *ultimatum*? Can we the Slave States *honorably* remain in this Union, if Kansas is refused admission *because* she asks it as a Slave State? Do answer me these questions & make whatever suggestions may occur to you.²⁵

Their ensuing correspondence reveals that Perry was as ardent a defender of Southern institutions as Hammond. He had condemned proslavery men as well as Abolitionists for attempting to secure Kansas by paid immigration and force of arms, and had insisted that *bona fide* settlers should determine the question;²⁶ but he was ready to go the full way with Hammond in resisting any attempt of the North to exclude slave states from the Union. Before making his speech for the Lecompton constitution on March 4, 1858, Hammond discussed his main points in a letter to Perry, ending with the postscript: “We must push in both houses the ultimatum of Disunion to alarm the North. They need it much. I don’t think we shall be beaten, but if we are, I don’t see how we can with honor

²⁵ J. H. Hammond to Perry, December 31, 1857, Perry Papers; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 108-109.

²⁶ *Greenville Patriot and Mountaineer*, March 6, June 12, 19, July 3, September 25, 1856.

or safety remain in the same government."²⁷ To which Perry replied:

We are looking forward with much interest for your speech on Kansas—I see the debate has commenced & the papers state that Kansas will be admitted. I hope so most sincerely. . . . We are fighting for a shadow, for the state never will be a slave state—But there is a great principle at stake in the contest which the South never can give up & remain in the Union. This I say as a Union man & which I said in the State Convention in 1851.

I am greatly chagrined & mortified at the course of Judge Douglas—His tergiversations [tergiversations] have almost made me loose confidence in the whole Northern Democracy. But Buchanan still stands up like a Patriot & we ought to give him our warm support.

If the country should divide into sectional parties there is an end of the Union—As soon as parties are formed on such a principle it will behoove the South to take care of herself. . . .²⁸

A month later, while dissension in Congress still raged, Hammond wrote:

I cannot tell how Kansas is to end. . . .

Tell me when the thing is disposed of what you think ought to be done by the South. My aim is to keep So Ca *with the South* & I give many votes I don't like, that we may not be considered as we have been factious.²⁹

Perry answered:

I heartily concur in the views expressed in your last letter as to men & measures at Washington. No matter what issue may come, or whether any crisis comes it is all important to keep the South united. If this can be done I apprehend no danger. We can dictate our own terms. There will always be a minority at the North, honest enough, & wise enough, to sustain the constitutional rights of the Republic. By keeping the South united we may with that minority be able to maintain our equality in the Union or our Independence out of it. The course hitherto pursued by South

²⁷ February 14, 1858, Perry Papers.

²⁸ March 7, 1858, Hammond Papers, Vol. XXII (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

²⁹ April 9, 1858, Perry Papers. See also Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 110-

Carolina has been offensive to the other Southern States & weakened the cause of the South. . . .

Should Congress adjourn without the satisfactory settlement of the Kansas question, would it not be wise for the Southern Senators & Members of the House to meet & form plans as to the future? Such a course would keep the South together & prevent that confusion & distraction in our opposition which has always prevailed in all the Southern States. It is unnecessary to have political excitements to end as they heretofore have done in nothing but mischief.

Shortly after writing you my last letter, before this, I had the pleasure of reading your very able & Statesman like speech on Kansas—I said in a letter to Judge Evans that it was the speech of a gentleman & a scholar as well as that of a Statesman & patriot—You have shown the ability of the South to maintain herself under any circumstances & that it is the great & paramount interest of the North that the two sections should continue united. . . .

The opinion which I have expressed of your speech is the unanimous opinion of the whole state. . . .³⁰

Soon afterwards Hammond voted for the English Bill, which was accepted by the South as a satisfactory compromise of the Kansas question. On his return to South Carolina in the summer, he made a speech to his constituents at Beach Island embodying his more hopeful attitude. Disunion he did not now think necessary; let the South but strengthen and consolidate her resources, and her position in the Union was secure. His Secessionist friends were alarmed at his conservatism and reliance on the Northern Democratic party; many believed that he had turned Unionist. The radicals condemned him vociferously, aligning him with Orr. At Barnwell Court House on October 29, Hammond boldly clarified his views, asserting that an overwhelming majority of the South would prefer to remain in the Union if it were governed under constitutional principles, and that though he regarded the Union as only “a policy, and not a principle,” he believed the South should remain in it and continue to control it. The speech more than ever convinced Southern extremists that Hammond

³⁰ April 18, 1858, Hammond Papers, Vol. XXIII.

was now a Unionist.³¹ So he may be designated if one is willing to admit a Unionism of expediency rather than principle. But he describes the true situation in a letter to his friend, Congressman W. P. Miles, of Charleston:

In your compendious formula which divides all Southern men into two classes—at bottom—those who shape their course for Union at all hazards & those who shape it for an independent Southern Republic, you *leave out* 999 in every 1000 of the voters & 49 in every 50 of the substantial & influential men of the South. You ignore them utterly yet they have *all power* in their hands. This immense body goes for the Union until it pinches them & then for dissolving it. It is a *fact*, which cannot be denied, a vital fact. . . .

You are not so hopeful of the future as I am. I am sorry for you, for being a hypochondriac I should be the least hopeful of mortals & so I am personally. But as regards my country—the South—I am buoyant & confident, 1st Because she has attained a strength that enables her to defy the world in or out of this or any other Union. 2nd Because she has convinced the world that this Abolition Crusade is an absurdity & the world is practically confessing the conviction. 3rd Because these truths are accepted *in* the Union & the North is willing to accept our dictation if couched in decent terms & based on reason. . . .

My dear Miles, the books will teach us that revolutions are [not] effected on abstractions. . . . There must be a *pinch* of some sort, & with Cotton at 10c & negroes at \$1000 the South will know no *pinch*.³²

After Hammond's Beach Island speech Perry wrote in his Journal:

The State is now quiet in politics—Senator Hammond has given the death blow to disunion & Revolution. Orr & Keitt go with him—They are as conservative now as I am—They are all on my platform where I have staid all my life. After thirty years of wrangling & childish & silly excitement the politicians of South Carolina are now disposed to act with the South—which I was always disposed to do—I regard the slavery question on stronger

³¹ Merritt, *James Henry Hammond*, pp. 122-127; Boucher, "South Carolina and the South on the Eve of Secession, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, pp. 123-126.

³² November 23, 1858, Miles Papers.

ground than it ever was—There is no danger & never has been any so far as the South is concerned. It is impossible for the Federal Government to destroy slavery—And I regard it impossible to destroy the Union—No honest man ought to wish it—But as Homer said more than two thousand years ago “the homeless & the tribeless” “are always for revolution.”³³

Though Orr declined running for re-election to Congress in 1858, another National Democrat, John D. Ashmore, of Anderson, was elected. After his nomination, Ashmore had written Perry: “I leave it now for the good people to decide, with the firm conviction as I have before said to you that you and the Patriot will make the Congressman.” And again: “I expect to look to yourself and Col. Orr on all occasions for counsel & advice. I have confidence in your wisdom, integrity and Patriotism. . . .”³⁴ Another victory for the conservatives was won when the legislature elected James Chesnut, of Camden, senator over Governor Adams.³⁵

II

Thus, to all outward appearance, Unionism was triumphant in South Carolina in 1858. As in all the Southern states, a sharp reaction had taken place against the secessionist movement of 1850-1852. People were weary of sectional agitation and distrustful of old leaders who had constantly involved them in fruitless strife with the Federal Government. Just as Orr and Perry had supplanted Rhett as leaders in South Carolina, so had conservatives triumphed over radicals in all the other cotton states. Unionist sentiment was strong throughout the South. The country was prosperous, and men agreed with Hammond that slavery was safe within the Union.

But it was the delusive calm that precedes the storm. During the decade of the fifties, one controversy after another had arisen to shake the equilibrium so carefully established by the Compromise of 1850. First, the North nullified the Fugitive

³³ II, August 29, 1858.

³⁴ January 28, 30, 1858, Perry Papers.

³⁵ Merritt, *James Henry Hammond*, p. 128; Wm. C. Preston to Francis Lieber, December 19, 1858, Lieber Papers (University of South Carolina).

Slave Law, the term of the Compromise that had won the support of many Southerners who disapproved other features. Because of the growing antislavery sentiment in the North, mobs led by influential citizens rescued slaves on the main thoroughfares of cities; local authorities prohibited masters from entering towns in pursuit of fugitives; and states passed Personal Liberty laws guaranteeing jury trial to slaves in defiance of national legislation. Every such episode caused mounting indignation in the South.

Meanwhile, constant republication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, depicting the pathos of Southern slavery, enlisted thousands of new recruits in the antislavery crusade. "Uncle Tom" became the symbol of the hated Southern slavocracy. Passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854, setting aside the Missouri Compromise for the principle of popular sovereignty in the territories, added to the rancor of the North, which regarded Douglas's championship of the bill as a deliberate bid for support of the South. Whereas Douglas's motives were largely economic, and Southerners had little interest in a region so unsuitable for slavery, the North regarded the act as a breach of faith and evidence of the determination of the slaveholder to dominate all the territories. Abolitionists thereupon financed the Emigrant Aid Society to insure Kansas to the Free-Soilers; but Missourians crossed the border to win the territory for slavery. Ensuing illegal elections, civil war, and atrocities on the part of both parties made "Bleeding Kansas" an expressive name for the territory. In 1856 Sumner rose, in his majestic manner, in the Senate to denounce with brilliant sarcasm the slave power for its "Crime against Kansas"—in the course of which he spoke in offensive language of Judge Butler of South Carolina. A few days later Butler's nephew, Preston Brooks, a young member of the House from South Carolina, sought Sumner in the Senate chamber after the session and beat him over the head with a cane. Northern journals poured forth a tirade of abuse against the "cowardly" assault. "Bully Brooks" was another slogan

along with "Uncle Tom" in the Republican campaign a few months later. And in 1857 the climax of Northern indignation was reached when the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott decision announced that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territories. This was conclusive proof, said the North, of a conspiracy by the "Slave Power" to dominate every branch of the national government.

The South had arisen in hot defense against the slurring attacks of the antislavery North. Formation of the Republican party with its avowed object of preventing extension of slavery in the territories had seemed a direct threat to slavery in the states. "Black Republicanism" came to have as hated a meaning in the South as "Slave Power" in the North. Southerners called loudly for support of the Democratic party in 1856 to preserve the Union against the sectionalizing tendencies of the Republicans. Democratic victory entrenched the power of the conservatives in the South.

But while the surface current flowed with the Unionists, an undercurrent of Southern resistance was slowly arising. Seeing the hopelessness of regaining political control within the states, Rhett, Yancey, and other radicals concentrated their efforts on arousing a spirit of Southern nationalism. Constantly, through speeches, pamphlets, leagues, and associations, they instilled in the people the doctrine that the North would make war to the death on Southern institutions and that the South must be prepared to resist the aggressor by setting up an independent nation. While Rhett directed the movement so skilfully that he fully deserves the title "Father of Secession," Yancey lent his magnetic oratory constantly to the cause, and Edmund Ruffin of Virginia stopped editing his agricultural journal to become a veritable Peter the Hermit preaching the secessionist gospel. Other Southern nationalists—though with no such direct motive—prepared the Southern mind for the idea of independence. James D. B. DeBow, editor of the most widely circulated *Review* in the South, was the apostle for commercial independence, and William Gregg urged the

section to throw off its subservience to the North in manufacturing. Secession had failed in 1852 because the Southern mind was not prepared. Rhett and Yancey knew that an emotional force must be built up among the masses strong enough to carry the South out of the Union on the high tide of excitement.

The sectional clashes of the fifties were fertile soil for developing a spirit of Southern resistance, but how could an issue be found of sufficient appeal to accomplish secession? Suddenly, in 1858, the long-sought opportunity seemed to appear. Douglas's revolt against Buchanan on the question of admitting Kansas under the proslavery Lecompton constitution was causing a fatal rift in the Democratic party. Southern Democrats—even some of the most conservative like Perry and Hammond, as we have seen—condemned Douglas's apostasy to the South. Now, thought Rhett, a sectional party could be created and disunion attained. In preparation, Ruffin and Yancey launched their *Leagues of United Southerners*. But the masses were not ready for the movement; conservatism still held sway in the South. In the fall, however, Douglas widened the breach between him and slaveholding Democrats by asserting that a territory might render the Dred Scott decision ineffective by declining to pass legislation protecting slavery. Lincoln had forced him to it in the Freeport debate, and thereby prepared the way for Republican victory in 1860.

In July, 1859, Rhett and Yancey started their campaign to force secession over the coming presidential election. While agreeing in purpose—to split the Democratic party and secure election of a Republican President—they disagreed in method. Yancey urged the other Southern states to adopt the Alabama platform, pledging withdrawal from the Charleston convention if they failed to secure a platform for congressional protection of slavery in the territories; but Rhett, distrusting any co-operative action by the South, advocated nonparticipation in the convention as the most efficacious means. Together they entered upon a speaking tour in South Carolina, but were

greatly discouraged. Even yet, Carolinians were apathetic toward secession.³⁶

Then in October hope again revived. The fanatical attack of John Brown on Harper's Ferry presented an issue that would fire the hearts of all Southerners. Here, it seemed, was the culmination of the long-talked-of plot of Northern abolitionists to destroy the institution of the South. Conservatives as well as radicals were incensed. Chesnut denounced the outrage on the floor of the Senate, and Hammond, to fulfil his duty to his state, abandoned his intention of resigning because of ill health.³⁷ When the legislature met that fall, the disunionists attempted to secure some drastic move that would start the ball of secession rolling in the South. But the National Democrats would take no action to put South Carolina in the lead. Well remembering the isolation of the state in 1852, they played for safety by pushing through Memminger's resolutions on December 22, recommending a Southern congress and a commission to Virginia to offer sympathy and advice.³⁸

Perry took a prominent part in the heated debates, condemning the abolitionists vehemently, but relying still on the sanity of the North and the power of concerted Southern resistance. On December 2 he offered resolutions denouncing the sympathy of a "portion of the Northern people" for the insurrection and stating that the *general* adoption of such feelings and sentiments by the Northern states would make it dishonorable for South Carolina and the other slaveholding states to continue united in the same government "with a people whose social and moral tone characterizes them as a nation of savages, assassins and traitors"; and that South Carolina

■ Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (New York, 1942), pp. 272-407; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 135-161; Dubose, *William Lowndes Yancey*, pp. 359-377, 439-440; Arthur C. Cole, *The Irrepressible Conflict, 1850-1865* (New York, 1934), pp. 262-279.

³⁷ *Congressional Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., Part I, pp. 36-37; Hammond to B. T. Watts, December 6, 1860, Watts Papers (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina).

³⁸ White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 157-160; *Charleston Mercury*, February 7, 1860; *Keowee Courier*, January 7, 1860.

held herself in readiness to act in concert with her sister slaveholding states to maintain and defend the interests of the South "in the Union or out of it." He wrote to his constituents, however, at the close of the session: "I do not believe anything serious will grow out of our present excitement, neither disunion, civil war nor danger to slavery. I have confidence in the good sense of the American people." The mission to Virginia he considered "in bad taste and Quixotic. The Virginia Legislature is in session, and will defend her honor and interests without the advice of South Carolina."³⁹

Memminger, entrusted with the delicate mission, was disappointed to find the Virginia legislature too fearful of disunion to endorse a Southern congress. The South Carolina legislature had hoped, under Virginia's leadership, to unite the South in a demand for new terms of security in the Union or a Southern confederacy. But Memminger wrote to Miles from Richmond: "I am brought to the opinion that we further South will be compelled to act, and to drag after us these divided states."⁴⁰ Since only Mississippi and Alabama elected delegates to the proposed congress, the disunion movement failed in its incipency. Only in Alabama, under the skilful direction of Yancey, did the Secessionists keep up their agitation. The state Democratic convention in January adopted the Alabama platform, and in February the legislature passed resolutions directing the Governor, in event of Republican victory in November, to issue a proclamation for election of a state convention within forty days.⁴¹

In South Carolina the National Democrats, now in control of the state, quietly urged participation in the Democratic national convention as a matter of course. Most of the press

³⁹ South Carolina *House Journal*, 1859, pp. 72-73; *Charleston Daily Courier*, August 24, 1860; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, December 8, 1859; letter to *Patriot and Mountaineer*, December 18, 1859, Perry Scrap Book.

⁴⁰ December 27, 1859, January 3, 16, 24, 30, February 4, 6, 1860, Miles Papers. For a full account of his mission, see Ollinger Crenshaw, "Christopher G. Memminger's Mission to Virginia, 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, VIII (August, 1942), 334-349.

⁴¹ Dubose, *William Lowndes Yancey*, pp. 439-443; *New York Tribune*, March 15, 1860.

heartily endorsed the movement; only a few newspapers in the lower districts supported the *Mercury* in its opposition. Convention advocates were almost unanimous in asserting that the South should enter the convention to nominate a candidate acceptable to North and South, and thus secure Democratic victory and a continuation of Southern dominance in the Union. Most of them suggested Southern nominees for President: Hunter of Virginia, Orr, Breckinridge of Kentucky, or Hammond.⁴² Ashmore wrote to Perry: "My opinion is that a conservative Southern man should be nominated on the Cincinnati platform without the crossing of t or dotting an I. . . . If Orr is nominated we can elect him with all ease."⁴³

Perry communicated with Orr, who replied that he had not "cherished the aspiration" and would leave the matter to his friends. But he did not think it politic for South Carolina to vote for him at the outset, as any name used against Douglas would be attacked by his friends; the delegation should first vote for some other Southern man. Then, suggested Orr:

If the [state] convention would with tolerable unanimity express a preference for me coupled with a declaration that the delegates should go to Charleston free to cast their votes without instructions I think it would have a good effect. Will you think of it?

I hope you will go to Columbia and I desire that you should be appointed a delegate at large to Charleston. Upon these points we will converse more fully at the Courts. . . .

I think from the signs we will have a full attendance at Columbia. We must keep a sharp look out upon the Ultras who may try to worm themselves into the body for mischief—Genl. Bonhams letter is a fire brand—if we adopt the Alabama resolutions in our convention then our delegates will have either to disobey instructions or walk out of the convention. The platform at Charleston will be a re-affirming of the Cincinnati platform, and the Dred Scott decision—with such a platform our rights will be secure and we can elect our nominee—if we press for more where it is not

⁴² Charleston *Courier*, March 10, 15, 1860; Sumter *Watchman*, March 7, 1860; Orangeburg *Southron*, February 15, 1860; Keowee *Courier*, January 21, March 31, 1860; Lancaster *Ledger*, February 8, March 21, 1860; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, February 9, 1860.

⁴³ February 12, 1860, Perry Papers.

needed our candidate will be defeated & a black republican elected by our folly.⁴⁴

In February and March all but five districts in the state elected delegates to the state Democratic convention at Columbia. Many of the public meetings, especially in the upper districts and Charleston, expressed an earnest desire to harmonize with their sister states of the South and preserve the Union. At the Greenville meeting on February 6 Perry made a brief address on the importance of participating in the convention, and was elected one of the delegates.⁴⁵ After the elections R. B. Rhett, Jr., wrote disconsolately to Miles:

I fear that, under Col. Orr's management, the weakest men have been selected to go there, and that weak men will be sent to the Charleston Convention, untrammelled by any commitments or instructions. I feel confident that, so far from encouraging Alabama & Mississippi to insist upon the repudiation of squatter sovereignty or to retire in case of failure, many of these delegates will strive to let down those states and defeat such action, for the purpose of promoting the prospects of the party.⁴⁶

The Columbia convention, according to the correspondent of the *Courier*, was an assemblage of men "of high tone and extended reputation," representing all but seven districts in the state. Perry called it to order, and Orr was elected president. In his address Orr stated that the coming presidential election would decide the fate of the Government for weal or for woe. It was therefore important that they consult with their friends at Charleston upon the best means of meeting the wily foe that had carried most of the free states in 1856. They should not distrust the Northern Democrats, for there was no hint of squatter sovereignty in the nonintervention policy adopted at the Cincinnati convention. Since the Supreme Court in 1857 had declared that Congress had no authority to prohibit slavery in the territories, how could its mere creature,

⁴⁴ March 5, 1860, *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Charleston *Courier*, February 10, 24, April 11, 1860; *Keowee Courier*, February 18, April 7, 1860; Lancaster *Ledger*, March 7, 1860.

⁴⁶ March 28, 1860, Miles Papers.

the territorial legislature, have greater power? But the Republicans stood for prohibition by Congress of slavery in the territories. The Democrats were the only party that would help maintain the rights of the South in the Union.⁴⁷

The convention repudiated the Alabama platform by a large majority and adopted resolutions reaffirming the Baltimore and Cincinnati platforms (with an amendment denying the power of a territorial government, prior to the formation of a state constitution, to abolish or exclude slavery, either by direct or unfriendly legislation) and approving the Dred Scott decision. It also passed unanimously the following resolution offered by Perry: "That if in the judgment of our delegates to the Charleston Convention they should at any time deem it prudent to present the name of the Hon. James L. Orr as a nominee for the Presidency, it will meet our hearty approval." Four delegates at large to the Charleston convention were elected, and two from each congressional district, Perry and J. P. Reed, of Anderson, being elected from the fifth district.⁴⁸

Orr said in farewell to the convention:

I am one of those who have believed, and who now believe, that this great Government, which was handed down to us by the noblest ancestors that any people ever had, is yet worth preserving; and if it can be preserved in unison with our rights, with our interests and with our honor, so help me God, my hand shall never be raised to strike it down.

. . . I yet believe that there will be good sense enough, and patriotism enough, in the bosoms of our brethren of the North and West, to stay their fanatical hands, and to restore peace and harmony in this Union. . . .⁴⁹

R. B. Rhett, Jr., telegraphed Miles from Columbia: "The Convention has been an Orr affair—Alabama resolutions rejected Cincinnati Platform reaffirmed with Dred Scott decision

⁴⁷ *Charleston Courier*, April 16, 17, 18, 1860; *South Carolina Democratic State Convention Proceedings*, April 16-17, 1860 (Columbia, 1860), pp. 3-10.

⁴⁸ *State Convention Proceedings*, 1860, pp. 12-17; *New York Daily Tribune*, April 19, 1860.

⁴⁹ *State Convention Proceedings*, 1860, p. 19.

uninterpreted. . . . Our friends are justified a packed Jury trimming to keep in with Douglas."⁵⁰

Thus the National Democrats were still strongly in the ascendancy when South Carolina entered the national Democratic convention in 1860. All the delegates elected to Charleston were conservatives, bent on nominating a President acceptable to both the Northern and Southern Democracy—a President who would preserve Southern dominance within the Union. But if the convention adopted a platform that seemed hostile to slavery, could the South Carolina delegates maintain their equilibrium? Southern emotionalism had reached a dangerous stage by 1860.

⁵⁰ April 17, 1860, Miles Papers.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Progressive Reformer

INDUSTRIALISM and democracy were as important as nationalism in the program of the National Democrats from 1852 to 1860. South Carolina leaders sought to swing the state into the full current of democratic and industrial reform that was sweeping the nation.¹ Rule of the old planter aristocracy was seriously threatened. By 1860 a new Carolina was emerging that emphasized the rights of the common man, diversified industries, and the prosperity of the South. Actual gains were not spectacular, but the movement steadily gathered momentum under Charleston and up-country leaders.

When party strife had ended in 1852, Perry started a campaign in the *Patriot* for reform of "abuses at home"—urging popular elections, equality of representation, public schools, a penitentiary, internal improvements, and development of mechanic arts. "What might not South Carolina now be if her Calhouns, Haynes, McDuffies, Hamiltons and Prestons had devoted their great talents and energies to the commercial and internal improvements of the State, instead of frittering them away in political squabbles, which ended in nothing?" he asked.²

He urged emulation of the North:

Instead of boasting of our superiority over the Yankees, and denouncing the *Southern Patriot* for telling the Southern people that in commerce, in manufactures, in education, in wealth and prosperity, we are behind the North, let the Southern people take les-

¹ White, "The National Democrats in South Carolina, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, pp. 372-375.

² June 23, 1853.

sons from the Yankees, in industry, wisdom and economy, and strive to become their equals as merchants and manufacturers, as mechanics and scientific men. It is their indolent, self-satisfied, self-important, and inert, prodigal spirit, which the *Southern Patriot* has made war against, which has exerted so baneful an influence over the Southern States, and especially over South Carolina.³

In 1855 Orr made an address at the annual fair of the South Carolina Institute in Charleston, urging diversified industries as the salvation of the South. Perry thus commented editorially: "And one such speech as this of Col. Orr's will do more good in the State than all the patriotic fustian and bombast which have been delivered in South Carolina for the last twenty years."⁴ The next year Perry was invited to deliver the annual address, and appealed earnestly for the development of manufacturing and mechanic arts in the South. Calling attention to the industrial exhibits at the fair, he expressed the hope that the Institute would continue its fostering of diversified industry in the state. South Carolina's poverty was due to her persistence in devoting her energies to raising cotton and neglecting manufactures. How ridiculous to send cotton to the factories of the North when it could be so much more cheaply manufactured at home! Graniteville was a notable illustration of its success. No nation without diversified industry had ever been great. Charleston would now rival Philadelphia if it had developed manufactures. As it was, South Carolina was dependent on the North, when it behooved her to be independent. Where could she obtain the implements of war if dire necessity forced a separation?⁵

Agitation for democratic reform in the state government received impetus during the period. Representatives of the populous up country waged a continuous fight to end the control of the Senate by the aristocratic parish minority. Perry gave notice in the *Patriot* that he would keep agitating equality of representation and popular election of governor and presi-

³ May 11, 1854.

⁴ April 26, 1855.

⁵ *Greenville Patriot and Mountaineer*, December 4, 1856.

dential electors until the reforms were conceded. The bill to divide Pendleton into the two election districts of Anderson and Pickens had passed the House several times, only to be defeated in the Senate. In 1852 Perry made a speech for the measure that was published widely over the state, and two years later the Senate finally responded to public sentiment by conceding the division, which gave the up country an additional senator. The electoral question was made a campaign issue in the legislative election of 1854; but though advocates of popular election were endorsed by the voters, the Senate stubbornly refused to resign its control. Perry persistently introduced a bill for the reform each year, and G. D. Tillman of Edgefield electrified the House in a speech supporting it in 1855, but their efforts were in vain. One other victory was gained by Perry and the progressives when the legislature in 1859 finally created the Court of Appeals.⁶

The decade of the fifties was one of great railroad development in South Carolina. In 1852 a grandiose project known as the Blue Ridge Railroad was launched to connect Charleston with the valley of the Mississippi. It was a revival of the old Louisville and Charleston project in modified form. Instead of following the French Broad, the route was to start at Anderson and follow Rabun Gap and the Little Tennessee River to Knoxville. Advocates spoke again of connecting with the rich trade of the West and making Charleston the "Queen City of the South." Perry made a speech in the legislature in favor of granting state aid in the form of a \$1,250,000 guarantee of the railroad bonds, and painted in glowing colors the benefits that would flow to the whole state. When the contract was let, it was found that the tunnels and cuts were a prodigious undertaking. Again the state was besieged for aid, and in 1854 Perry helped secure passage of a bill for a state subscription of \$1,000,000 in stock and a state guarantee

⁶ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 4, 11, 1851, January 8, 15, June 2, November 10, December 22, 29, 1853; February 16, March 2, June 15, 29, August 31, September 28, October 19, December 7, 1854; Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, December 13, 20, 1855; Boucher, "Sectionalism, Representation and the Electoral Question in Ante-bellum South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 38-62.

of bonds for \$1,000,000 more. Again in 1858 he and Memminger ardently advocated further aid, contending that the state should not allow the road to be abandoned. Fortunately, the legislature did not sink any more money in the project, for it ended in disastrous failure. Nothing was left except unfinished tunnels and embankments and a few miles of railroad from Anderson to Pendleton.⁷ Perry rejoiced when the Greenville and Columbia Railroad was successfully completed to Greenville in December, 1853. In August of that year he attended a railroad convention at Asheville to make plans for organizing "The French Broad and Greenville Railroad" to run from Lexington, Kentucky, through Cumberland Gap to connect with the Greenville road. The charter was granted by North Carolina in 1855, but the road did not materialize.⁸

In spite of his advocacy of progressive improvements that required assistance from banking, Perry maintained the same inflexible attitude toward the Bank of the State. Recharter of the corporation was one of the issues in the legislative campaign of 1852, and Perry came out strongly against it as an "institution corrupting in its influence, dangerous to the rights and liberties of the people, and hazardous to the property holders of the State." He fought its constitutionality on the floor of the House, but its recharter until 1871 was secured. When all the banks in the state had suspended specie payments in 1857, he urged enforcement of the 5 per cent penalty on the Bank of the State.⁹

Often in the legislature Perry attempted to secure reform of the unfair free-school system, by which funds for education of the poor were granted each district in proportion to its representation in the legislature, a plan which gave some of the

⁷ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 16, 1852, January 13, 1853, October 19, December 14, 21, 1854, January 4, 1855; Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, June 5, 19, 1856, January 8, September 3, 1857; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, April 8, 1858, December 15, 1859; clippings, Perry Scrap Book; Edward Frost to Perry, January 3, 1859, Perry Papers.

⁸ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, August 25, December 8, 1853, January 25, October 25, 1855.

⁹ *Ibid.*, July 29, December 16, 1852; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, December 17, 1857; speech on Bank Suspension, December 11, 1857. Perry Scrap Book.

wealthy parishes fifty dollars per pupil while districts of the up country received one dollar. He urged distribution by number of white inhabitants. By 1854 he was advocating a common school system like that of New England, supported by state and district taxes, and open to both rich and poor.¹⁰ His interest originated in a heated press controversy with one of the editors of the *Mercury*, William R. Taber, a talented nephew of Rhett. At a South Carolina College commencement Perry heard Taber's address in which he opposed education of the laboring classes, contending that a little learning made them vicious and idle, and holding up the old Athenian ideal of education of the privileged few. Perry reported indignantly in the *Patriot*:

I must confess, that never before has it fallen to my lot . . . to listen to such a farrago of insolence, ignorance and tyranny as were embodied in his speech. It was worthy of the dark ages of Europe and the iron rule of a feudal baron. The whole speech was not only against human liberty, but in opposition to republicanism, to civilization and the spirit of the age.¹¹

So aroused were the working classes of Columbia that they held a mass meeting on the evening of December 15 and burned Taber in effigy. Next morning a committee invited Perry to address the citizens on the subject of popular education at the Town Hall the following evening. He consented and found the largest crowd assembled that had attended a town meeting in many years. He spoke eloquently on the importance of popular education in the preservation of republican institutions:

As the human mind has been enlightened, the shackles of despotism have fallen from the hands of the people. All the governments of Europe have become freer and more liberalized, as the people have become more educated and more intelligent. In this respect, these United States are peculiarly blessed, and have been, since the first settlement of the Colonies.

¹⁰ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, August 1, 1851, January 12, 1854.

¹¹ December 8, 1853.

Citing the achievements of such men as Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Jackson, and Clay to prove the value of what some scornfully called "half education," he urged the importance of a common-school system supported by the state.

What is education, thorough or partial, but the means of opening to the human mind, the vast treasures of science and learning? Education is like a mechanic's tools. It is the instrument with which he acquires knowledge, power, wealth and happiness. A poor education may be likened unto a poor axe, which requires harder blows, and more of them, to cut down a forest tree. Still, it is better to have a dull axe than none at all.

If the state could spend from \$200 to \$500 each for the education of the sons of the rich at South Carolina College, it could afford also to educate the sons of the poor.¹²

The speech was published widely and increased popular agitation. During the ensuing months Perry lashed Taber unmercifully in the *Southern Patriot*, even quoting extracts of letters from President James H. Thornwell, of South Carolina College, Francis Lieber, O'Neill, Richard Yeadon, and others to corroborate his charges. Taber contended that he had been misquoted, and that, having spoken only from notes, he could not reproduce the address. Finally, after a meeting of Charleston citizens had passed resolutions denouncing it, he came out with a version which, though somewhat modified according to many who had heard it, Perry accepted as a basis for further vituperative attack. Though Lieber and other friends warned Perry that he was only elevating Taber to undue notoriety by continuing the controversy, and O'Neill wrote that he and Perry's Charleston friends thought he had crushed Taber completely and should say no more, Perry stubbornly persisted in retorting with biting sarcasm to attacks of the antirepublican press supporting Taber. Many up-country journals, such as the *Due West Telescope*, *Chester Standard*, and *Lancaster Ledger*, entered the fray on Perry's side. It became a general contest between the new spirit of democracy and the old aristo-

¹² "Speech of B. F. Perry Before the Mechanics, Merchants and Business Men of Columbia, December 17, 1853," Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 29, 1853.

cratic ideal of the state. Even mild-tempered O'Neill wrote to Perry: "I detest the whole race of Aristocrats wherewith our State is infested—whether they be *drunk* or *sober*."¹³

Taber had challenged Perry after his first abusive attack; but after consultation with Thompson and General Samuel McGowan, Perry replied that he declined to accept, as he had only remarked on the character of a public address and said nothing touching Taber's honor.¹⁴

Public excitement resulted in several attempts at reform of the free-school system during the next few years. Perry rejoiced when Governor Adams, to whom he had sent a communication on free schools and other reform measures in the summer, advocated distribution of the fund according to white population. "Heretofore," said Perry, "this has been regarded in the same light with the unequal Parish representation." Memminger became interested in a plan for complete revision of public education. After visiting the common schools of the North in the spring of 1856, he introduced a similar system with great success in Charleston and attempted to secure its adoption by the state. Perry supported him in the *Patriot* and on the floors of the legislature. Finally the House passed the measure, only to have it rejected by the parish-controlled Senate. "It really seems that South Carolina is disposed to hold on to her ignorance and want of progressive improvement with a tenacity worthy of a better cause," wrote Perry.¹⁵

The movement for democratic reform in the educational system was extended to colleges. Since South Carolina College, with its prescribed classical course of study, was considered an institution for the wealthy, a demand arose for higher

¹³ John B. O'Neill to Perry, December 30, 1853, January 13, 31, 1854, Perry Papers; J. H. Thornwell to *idem*, December 31, 1853, *ibid.*; Francis Lieber to *idem*, January 3, 11, 1854, *ibid.*; Josiah J. Evans to *idem*, April 16, 1854, *ibid.*; R. Yeadon to *idem*, n.d. [January, 1854], *ibid.*; S. McGowan to *idem*, January 24, 1854, *ibid.*; G. D. Tillman to *idem*, February 20, 1854, *ibid.*; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, January 19, February 2, 9, 23, March 2, 16, 23, 1854.

¹⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 160-161, 225.

¹⁵ J. H. Adams to Perry, June 14, 1855, Perry Papers; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 21, 1854, August 30, September 13, December 6, 20, 1855; Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, May 22, July 24, December 4, 18, 25, 1856.

education for the middle class, which received benefit neither from the "poor schools" nor the state college. Perry made an unsuccessful attempt in the legislature to have the college reorganized on a less expensive basis with a curriculum allowing young men to select only those studies which would suit their talents and means. He and Orr were supporting the university plan advocated by W. C. Preston.¹⁶

But there was no chance for securing democratic reform in the state while the conservatives controlled the Senate. Despite the heroic efforts of the progressives, South Carolina was destined to be ruled by the aristocratic lords of the parishes until after the Civil War. Conventions as well as legislatures were dominated by the low country. Through their jealous perpetuation of the parish representative system and their staunch opposition to popular elections, the conservatives maintained minority rule. The voice of South Carolina was not the voice of the people.

II

Though the legislature was not interested in higher education for the masses, the churches established many colleges during the period. In 1850 the Baptist convention decided to place Furman University at Greenville and began erecting buildings on the beautiful hillside across Reedy River the following year. Perry's oldest son was in the second graduating class in 1856.¹⁷ In 1854 both the Methodist and Baptist Associations were considering the establishment of a woman's college in some town of the up country. In the columns of the *Patriot*, Perry urged his fellow-citizens to offer the lands and buildings of the Greenville academies as well as individual subscriptions to the Methodist conference. Greenville, however, allowed Spartanburg to outbid her and secure the college. Perry then urged immediate action to obtain the Baptist college. Accordingly, a meeting of citizens under his leadership decided by a vote of four to one to approve the

¹⁶ White, "The National Democrats in South Carolina, 1852 to 1860," *loc. cit.*, p. 376; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, November 26, 1857.

¹⁷ Greenville *Mountaineer*, May 3, 1850; Greenville *Southern Patriot*, June 27, 1851, July 26, 1855, August 7, 1856.

transfer of the academies. Individuals pledged \$20,000 as an additional inducement. After Perry and Vardry McBee had been elected to two vacancies on the Board of Trustees of the academies, it voted by seven to three to authorize the transfer. Thereupon two dissenting members of the Board, George F. Townes and Thomas M. Cox, protested the action as illegal, contending that the charter did not give the Board such power. As a measure of safety, the case was taken before the Court of Chancery, with Perry acting for the petitioners and C. P. Sullivan for the minority. After Chancellor D. L. Wardlaw had rendered a decision in favor of the transfer, G. F. Townes carried the case to the Court of Appeals.¹⁸

Meanwhile he and Perry were having a press controversy full of bitter personalities. Townes was then senior editor of the *Mountaineer*, which under Secessionist editorship since 1850 had been so abusive of Perry that he had wisely refrained from reading it. Now, however, Townes wrote an article accusing Perry of following Tom Benton and Tom Paine in politics and religion, and attacking the contemplated transfer of the academy property as an act of land piracy.¹⁹ When told of the editorial, Perry was shocked at what he regarded perfidy on the part of a friend.²⁰ He replied with a "most withering & terrific article" in the *Patriot*:

Now, most worthy "Senior," we shall turn on you, and handle you with gloves off. You have thrown down the gauntlet, and commenced the war in good earnest. We have borne with you and your paper till forbearance ceases to be a virtue. . . .

He accused Townes of deliberately misappropriating certain lands, of turning against his district in the legislature by renouncing his once-avowed championship of democratic reforms, and of warring against the best interests of Greenville "under the hollow pretense of conscientious scruples." In conclusion he wrote:

Now, sir, you may go—a convicted land pirate, defending the

¹⁸ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, June 16, 30, July 14, 21, 1853, January 12, May 25, June 15, 29, July 6, 13, 20, August 10, 1854.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1854.

²⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 161.

sanctity of land titles; false to your friends, and despised by them; false to your church, and a hypocrite before your God; false to your political principles, and a deceiver of your constituents. Nature has stamped your person, as well as your heart, with a malignant vulgarity unmistakable.²¹

Townes took out a warrant against Perry for libel and had him arrested and bound by a bond of \$300 to appear at court to meet the charge. In another blazing editorial Perry pointed out that Townes had first attacked him in a "grossly libelous" article.

But, we scorn to defend ourself in any such way. Our own good pen and right arm shall ever be our defence against the assaults of our enemies, without the aid of courts. We replied to the article with the force of truth, and are able to prove, in a court of justice, every word and syllable that we penned. . . .²²

But mutual friends intervened and kept the controversy out of court. In the *Patriot* of October 26 appeared a card announcing that Townes and Perry had agreed to withdraw the offensive paragraphs and thus had adjusted the difficulty.²³

In December Perry and Sullivan argued the college case before the Court of Appeals, which confirmed the legality of the transfer.²⁴ The stormy battle was over, and the Female College secured for Greenville. At commencement exercises four years later, Perry was given two handsome silver pitchers by the citizens of Greenville as a token of appreciation for his gratuitous professional services. In making the presentation, his old school friend, Randell Croft, voiced the high estimation in which he was held by his fellow-citizens:

In politics always consistent, firm and true to your honest convictions, you have towered far above the ordinary level, and commanded the high respect and admiration of those who differed from you most. You have been ever recognized as the fearless and able champion of truth and justice—the firm and steady friend, the open and generous opponent. In every department of your labors,

²¹ Editorial, July 6, 1854.

²² July 27, 1854.

²³ Letter of Orr, W. D. Simpson, J. W. Harrison, *ibid.*, October 26, 1854; Autobiography, 1874, p. 161.

²⁴ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, December 14, 21, 1854.

your character stands forth like some fair Corinthian column—majestic in its strength, just in all its proportions. . . .

To which Perry replied:

Brought up in the political school of Washington, I have made war against sectionalism all my life, as destructive of the best interests of the Republic, whilst I have defended with equal zeal the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States and the true interests of the South. In my fidelity to the Union, I have not loved less, but more, the State which gave me birth, and is my home. To her my first allegiance is due, but far above this feeling and stronger than this tie, is my love and devotion to Greenville, her people, her institutions, her mountains, and everything that is hers.²⁵

III

In general, the interval between the secession movement of 1850 and that of 1860 was a period of happiness and prosperity in Perry's life. His political principles were vindicated, his professional standing assured, and his public services appreciated. Until February, 1858, when he retired from newspaper work, his leisure time was devoted to editing his Unionist journal, which he combined with the Greenville *Mountaineer* in 1855 to form the *Patriot and Mountaineer*. The *Patriot*, he says, had broken down its Secessionist rival in Greenville. Claiming that the political differences which once separated the two papers so widely had practically ceased to exist, he appealed for a continuance of the *Mountaineer's* subscriptions. For several years C. J. Elford was associated with him as junior editor, and for a few months in 1856, a young lawyer, T. Q. Donaldson, also. Elford, or his brother, G. E. Elford, remained publisher and proprietor. In 1854 another newspaper, the *Southern Enterprise*, was established in Greenville by William P. Price; but it was far below the standard of excellence maintained by the *Patriot and Mountaineer* until Perry's retirement, when it became mediocre under G. E. Elford.²⁶

²⁵ Speeches of Randell Croft and Perry, July 22, 1858, Perry Scrap Book.

²⁶ Greenville *Southern Patriot*, May 25, 1854; Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, December 13, 1855; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, February 18, 1858; Journal, II, April 17, 1858; Autobiography, 1874, p. 151.



FAMILY GROUP

Perry's sons: HEXT McCALL, ROBERT HAYNE

Perry's grandson: PERRY BEATTIE

Perry's youngest son: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, JR. (christened Arthur); PERRY'S WIFE

Perry used the journal as an outlet for his literary propensities. In addition to political articles, he filled its columns with biographical sketches of prominent contemporary Carolinians or of nationally known figures whom he had met on his travels. Often he wrote descriptions of the towns on the Western circuit or the picturesque mountain scenery around Flat Rock and Asheville. He was especially fond of recounting the social happenings of the capital, or his week-end visits with congenial friends to the baronial homes of Governor J. H. Adams or John L. Manning. There were always book reviews and philosophical discussions. Indeed, Perry made his newspaper a personal journal and became so absorbed in his editorial duties that he neglected his diary. From 1851 to 1858 he wrote in it only at intervals of six months, a year, or even two years, to give a brief summary of family news or an inventory of his property. For the varied activities of his busy life one must search the columns of his newspaper.

Perry still found his greatest contentment with his wife and children. In the midst of the political excitement of 1851, another son, Hext, was born, followed within the next few years by two others, Robert Hayne and Arthur. There was a steady gain also in material blessings. In 1855 Perry recorded his professional income as \$4,000 or \$5,000; in 1858, \$7,000 or \$8,000, and the value of his property \$50,000, including twenty slaves. In 1857 he and his wife went North to take the three oldest children to school: William Hayne to Harvard, Frank to Annapolis, and Anna to St. Mary's Hall in New Jersey. But soon tragic sorrow invaded the home. Anna developed tuberculosis and returned within a few months, only to linger a year and die in January, 1859. In the spring of 1860 Frank was sent home from Annapolis with the same disease and died in July.²⁷

²⁷ Journal, II, June 12, 1853, June 18, 1854, January 28, 1855, January 1, April 17, August 29, September 28, October 10, 1858; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 135, 177; *Greenville Southern Patriot*, June 20, 1851; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, July 5, 1860; comments of Mrs. B. F. Perry, June 6, 18, 1888, in *Extracts from Perry Journal*, II, 87-90, III, 10-11, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Secession Accomplished

THE WITHDRAWAL of the South Carolina delegation from the Charleston convention¹ was a surrender to the pressure of the Administration and the excitement of the hour. As Perry maintained, they had no intention of deserting when they came to Charleston, for the Columbia convention had voted down the Alabama resolutions. The disunionists of South Carolina had stayed out of the convention. The delegation, therefore, was in no sense participating in Yancey's scheme for forcing secession. It was rather acquiescing in a daring party move engineered by Buchanan's agents at Charleston to defeat the nomination of Douglas.²

After Yancey's sensational speech presenting the slave-code platform as an ultimatum of the South, the South Carolina delegates, along with others, telegraphed their congressmen for advice and were told to quit the convention unless the platform were adopted. Thereupon they held a caucus, at which B. H. Wilson made a motion pledging the delegation to withdrawal. Perry stated that he had been sent to Charleston to represent the state in making a nomination for President, with no instructions to quit the convention under any circumstances; he would, therefore, not withdraw, even if the majority decided to do so. The delegates then determined to act on their own responsibility; and thirteen followed Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana out of the convention. Lemuel

¹ *Vide supra*, pp. 1-4.

² New York *Tribune*, March 10, 28, April 20, 21, 23, 1860; Halstead *Caucuses of 1860*, p. 13; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 186; Charleston *Courier*, April 24, 1860; Hammond to Harry Hammond, April 27, 1860, Hammond Papers.

Boozer of Lexington decided to remain with Perry to cast his vote for nomination of a President.³

In an earnest speech the following day, Perry defended his action in remaining in the convention and pled for a reconciliation of the Northern and Southern Democracy. Colonel James Simons had announced the withdrawal of the South Carolina delegation on the ground that the platform adopted—popular sovereignty, as stated in the Cincinnati platform of 1856—was not in harmony with that of the state convention, since it “palpably and intentionally” omitted any expression of the incapacity of the territorial government to legislate against property in slaves.⁴ Perry argued, however, that acceptance of the Cincinnati platform necessitated no renouncement of principle on the part of the South, which could retain its own interpretation of the question of slavery in the territories—an interpretation upheld by the Supreme Court. He had voted for the platform with this well-known Southern construction. A mere abstraction was causing a fatal split between the Northern and Southern Democracy. Each should make concessions to reunite the party and prevent Black Republican victory. Would not the North endorse the Dred Scott decision to restore harmony within the party? And would not the South give up its insistence on a slave code for the territories? It was suicidal to contend now for the principle of congressional intervention when the South had warred against it for so many years. As for his refusal to withdraw, he was fulfilling the wishes of the people as expressed in the Columbia convention, for rejection of the Alabama platform constituted instructions to remain in the convention.⁵

Perry and Boozer retained their seats, repeatedly casting their votes for Hunter of Virginia, only to be hissed each time

³ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 188; Merritt, *James Henry Hammond*, p. 135; Halstead, *Caucuses of 1860*, p. 51; *Proceedings of the Conventions at Charleston and Baltimore*, 1860, p. 121; *Charleston Courier*, May 2, 1860. J. P. Reed of Anderson had not signed the document, but withdrew (*New York Tribune*, May 2, 1860).

⁴ *Statement of So Much of the Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention at Charleston, April 1860, as Led to the Withdrawal of the Delegates from Certain States* (n.p., n.d., pamphlet), p. 17.

⁵ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 145-151; *Charleston Courier*, May 2, 1860.

by Secessionists in the gallery. Withdrawal of the cotton states had rendered nomination of a Southern candidate impossible, and the two-thirds rule prevented nomination of Douglas. The convention, therefore, adjourned in deadlock to meet again in Baltimore on June 18.

Meanwhile, convocation of the seceding delegates revealed that most of them were still hopeful of uniting the party on a Southern candidate. Yancey wisely refrained from advocating disunion. Especially were the South Carolinians wary on the subject. After adopting the platform rejected by the regular convention, the seceders adjourned to meet again in Richmond on June 11.⁶

But the secession at Charleston, undertaken as a party maneuver, was to develop under the skilful guidance of Rhett, Yancey, and other radicals into the long-planned movement for separate state secession. Thoughtful men in South Carolina saw the danger. Hammond considered the secession a "fizzle." Orr deplored it as "unwise and impolitic," portending defeat of the Democratic party. If the delegates had remained in the convention, he thought Breckinridge would have been nominated and elected.⁷ O'Neill wrote to the *Newberry Rising Sun*:

We are, I fear, in evil times; rashness is too much in the ascendant. I had hoped this Convention would act in harmony, and that a candidate would be selected who would unite the whole Democracy, Southern, Eastern, Western, as well as Northern. If that were done, the prophecy of our eminent Southern statesmen would be fully realized, that at the end of the next 4 years, the Black Republican party would be at an end. . . .⁸

Public sentiment in the state, however, borne along on a wave of excitement, approved the withdrawal. District meetings enthusiastically endorsed it and elected delegates to the

⁶ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 188; *Charleston Courier*, May 2, 3, 4, 1860; *New York Tribune*, May 2, 3, 4, 1860.

⁷ Hammond to W. G. Simms, May 11, 1860, Hammond Papers; *Spartanburg Express*, August 8, 1860.

⁸ Quoted in *Charleston Courier*, May 11, 1860.

state convention in Columbia on May 30 for the purpose of appointing delegates to Richmond. Despite Perry's confidence in the approval of his district, the Greenville meeting, under James C. Furman, president of Furman University, W. P. Price, and G. E. Elford, unanimously endorsed the position of the seceding delegates.⁹

Perry vigorously defended his course. In the Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, he described the outside pressure in Charleston that had influenced his colleagues to quit the convention, and showed that the course of the Democrats would inevitably end in Republican victory.¹⁰ When Franklin Gailard, editor of the Columbia *South Carolinian*, challenged his statements, Perry replied in a letter that was widely copied. In the movement for withdrawal he could see nothing but "division and distraction to the South," he averred. "We shall be found fighting and destroying each other, instead of presenting a united South in battle array against the common enemy." Had the seceding delegates remained, in all probability Hunter would have been nominated. As for the pressure in Charleston:

It is known to the whole country that almost every night during the Charleston Convention, there were meetings of the Southern Delegates, public speeches at the hotels, inflammatory speeches in caucuses, and a great deal of out-door consultation and arrangements as to what was to be done in certain emergencies. It is well known, too, that there was a large crowd of visitors in Charleston, Southern gentlemen who were much excited and active in talking over the events of the Convention. The newspapers in the city were not silent in regard to these matters. In the galleries of the Convention members who dared to do their duty conscientiously on the floor were hissed every time they rose to address the Convention or vote in it. This was altogether pretty strong outside pressure, producing a pretty strong excitement. We all know how contagious political excitements are. It is hard to resist such a contagion, and the boldest and most conscientious fall victims to it,

⁹ Charleston *Courier*, May 3, 12, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, 1860; Camden *Weekly Journal*, May 15, 1860; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, May 24, 1860.

¹⁰ Quoted in Charleston *Courier*, May 12, 1860.

before they are aware of its influence, and sometimes they never are conscious of it. . . .

I have done. I know that nothing I can say will have any influence on public opinion in South Carolina. Still, I desire to place myself properly before the State. The time may come when my creed and opinions will be found to savor more of truth and wisdom than they are now supposed to do. . . .¹¹

After public meetings had all endorsed the action of his colleagues in seceding, Perry wrote an "Address to the Democracy of the Fifth Congressional District in South Carolina" stating that he had thought his action would at least be upheld by the Convention party of the district. As everyone knew, it was the National Democrats, not the "Secession party," that represented South Carolina at the convention. He felt that their object was threefold: "to preserve the National Democratic party of the Union; to harmonize and agree on a platform which would embody the general political sentiments of that party; and to unite on suitable candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the United States." He knew that the Secession party was anxious to break up the National Democratic party and precipitate disunion. In remaining in the convention, he had been true to the platform of the state convention, which had rejected any endorsement of the action of Alabama.

Insistence of the Southern delegates on the slave-code platform was suicidal, he declared, for it meant inevitable victory for the Republicans. Northern Democrats could not concede more than a restatement of the Cincinnati platform without subjecting themselves to certain defeat at home. Southern Democrats must remember that the question of slavery in the territories was of no personal concern to their Northern allies, who had nobly fought their battle so many years. Why was the South so hostile to the identical platform on which it had already waged three presidential campaigns? Now its position had been powerfully strengthened by the decision of the

¹¹ Letter of May 15, 1860, *Charleston Courier*, May 19, 1860; *Keowee Courier*, June 2, 1860; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, May 24, 1860.

Supreme Court. Granting that the Cincinnati platform did imply the "squatter sovereignty" principle so hated by the South—though even Yancey had denied it in his speech at the Charleston convention—of what possible consequence could it be when the Court guaranteed protection of slave property in any territory? After all, the question was a mere abstraction. How could it profit a slaveholder to have the constitutional right to take his property into a territory if the soil, climate, and sentiment of the majority of the people were against it? No slaveowner would desire residence in a territory which was certain to vote itself a free state. The Southern Democrats, in repudiating the principle of congressional noninterference with slavery in the territories, which they had championed for thirteen or fourteen years, were merely adopting the other end of the platform of the Republicans, which demanded exclusion of slavery by Congress. It was a position fraught with danger, for the free states had a majority in Congress.

Southern members of Congress had approved the withdrawal at Charleston and urged the dissenting states to send delegates to Baltimore. The action was inconsistent, he argued. They should have condemned the Charleston secession, which had split the Democracy irreparably. There was no hope now of reconciliation; Republican victory would be the outcome. He doubted whether the recent meetings represented the political sentiments of the district.

Conservative men stay at home and avoid those meetings, whilst fire-eaters and politicians attend them. But whether mistaken or not in regard to public sentiment in this Congressional District, I never was more thoroughly convinced than I am now, of the correctness of my own course in remaining in the Charleston Convention and doing all I could to procure the nomination of Hunter, of Virginia, and defeat that of Judge Douglas. . . .

Although I have always been a Democrat, and have the most profound regard for Democratic principles, yet I have ever had moral courage enough to stem popular sovereignty when I saw it was drifting the ship of State on breakers and into whirlpools.

There is much more consolation in being *right* than in being *successful when wrong*. It has been my misfortune through life to have been in a minority, and yet I have had the consolation of seeing the opposing majorities ultimately acquiesce in the course I desired to be pursued. I have no doubt I shall have this satisfaction once more. And the time is not far distant when the breaking up of the National Democracy, and the secession of the Southern delegates from the Charleston Convention, will be regarded by all thinking men as a most unwise and foolish act, productive of nothing but faction and strife, mischief and defeat, inglorious submission or revolutionary abortion!¹²

Only from his Unionist friends and an occasional anonymous writer in the press did Perry receive endorsement. In the Charleston *Courier* of June 16, "Friends in Council" valiantly defended his action, praising him as "the determined friend of the Union." But even in Charleston his action was unpopular. In Sumter a group of patriotic citizens wrote to congratulate him on the firm position he had taken, expressing their confidence that he truly represented the "conservative masses of the country." An admirer from Camden ordered a number of copies of his address to distribute in Kershaw County.¹³

But though public sentiment in South Carolina endorsed the withdrawal at Charleston, it was as a means of attaining Southern rights within the Union, and not as a disunion move. This was clearly shown in the Democratic state convention that assembled in Columbia to elect delegates to Richmond. When the radicals, who had a majority by the unfair parish representative system, elected Rhett, the conservative nominees withdrew, determined not to accept a man who was the "incarnation of Disunion" to the South. At Richmond the Rhett delegation found their disunion doctrine extremely unpopular. All the other Southern delegates, except two or three from

¹² May 28, 1860, in Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 153-170; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, June 14, 1860.

¹³ John B. O'Neill to Perry, May 14 [1860], Perry Papers; J. J. Knox to *idem*, June 12, 1860, *ibid.*; Citizens of Sumter District to *idem*, n.d., *ibid.*; L. W. R. Blair to *idem*, June 4, 15, 1860, *ibid.*

Alabama, went on to Baltimore in the hope of reuniting the Democratic party. There a bitter contest was waged over seating the rival delegations from the seceding states. When the Douglas faction won, a second group of seceders joined those from Charleston. The Regular Democrats then nominated Douglas on the popular sovereignty platform, while the bolters, convening in the same city, nominated John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, for President and Joseph Lane, of Oregon, for Vice-President on the platform rejected at Charleston.¹⁴

Though rejoicing over the disruption of the Democratic party, Rhett shrewdly adopted moderation as his course, falling in line with the conservatives of South Carolina, who campaigned for Breckinridge and Lane as the only hope of preserving the Constitution and the Union. Yancey toured South Carolina, Alabama, and other Southern states in a series of brilliant addresses for these candidates, painting the dire consequences that would follow Republican victory. Hammond wrote that the entire South had been compelled to put itself on the platform of his Barnwell speech—"to make the battle *in* the Union."¹⁵ Of Rhett's speech at the Charleston ratification meeting for Breckinridge and Lane, he wrote Miles: "It is an exceedingly able speech & Rhett is a very able man. If it had come from any other person it would have been a great campaign Document." But, knowing the fatal stamp of disunionism attached to the name of Rhett, he went on: "My opinion is that So Ca should be as quiescent as usual in this election & that every blow she or any of her people strike for B. & L. will damage them."¹⁶

¹⁴ William Henry Trescott to Hammond, May 12, 1860, Hammond Papers; I. W. Hayne to *idem*, June 3, 1860, *ibid.*; Hammond to M. C. M. Hammond, July 4, 1860, *ibid.*; Charleston *Courier*, May 31, June 1, 26, 1860; Keowee *Courier*, June 9, 16, 1860; Charleston *Mercury*, June 6, 12, 13, 1860; New York *Tribune*, June 2, 9, 12, 13, 27, 1860; Ruffin Diary, I, May 29, 31, 1860.

¹⁵ Charleston *Mercury*, June 29, July 2, 4, 10, 25, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, July 9, 10, 11, 1860; New York *Tribune*, July 2, 3, August 24, 1860; Camden *Weekly Journal*, July 17, 1860; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, July 5, 1860; Hammond to W. G. Simms, July 10, 1860, Hammond Papers.

¹⁶ July 16, 1860, Miles Papers.

But quietude was the last thing the radicals would allow, for they had marked South Carolina as the best hope for leading in secession. After conversing with delegates from the cotton states at Richmond, Edmund Ruffin had written: "Not one of these states will move in secession first and alone unless S. C. will."¹⁷ It was the only state in which all factions endorsed Breckinridge. In Mississippi the old Whig Unionists of 1851, led by William L. Sharkey, formed a strong "Opposition" party against the disunionist designs of the Breckinridge Democrats, who were led ostensibly by Jefferson Davis, a moderate, but increasingly dominated by radical leaders like Governor John J. Pettus, Albert G. Brown, and D. C. Glenn. Sharkey's followers, mostly the large slaveholders of the western river valley, supported the Constitutional Union party, campaigning for Bell and Everett as the only candidates who could preserve the Union. A small group of Democrats, principally the old Union Democrats of 1851, led by the indomitable Henry Stuart Foote, refused to endorse the Charleston secession and supported Douglas. Both groups were moderates, opposed to the extreme demands of the Republicans and Breckinridge Democrats on the slavery question.¹⁸

Georgia furnished the most formidable opposition to the schemes of the disunionists. Alexander H. Stephens held Perry's view of the Charleston withdrawal and considered the nonintervention platform of Douglas perfectly safe for the South. He therefore lent his brilliant oratorical talents to the Douglas Democrats, as did his brother, Linton. Herschel V. Johnson, in accepting the vice-presidential nomination with Douglas, knew he was sacrificing his popularity in Georgia, but ably fought to the end. The Constitutional Union party was strongly led by Benjamin H. Hill, an orator of high abilities. If Toombs and Cobb had united with the moderates,

¹⁷ Ruffin Diary, I, June 14, 1860.

¹⁸ Percy L. Rainwater, *Mississippi: Storm Center of Secession 1856-1861* (Baton Rouge, 1938), pp. 103-157; Henry S. Foote, *War of the Rebellion*, pp. 276-291; James B. Ranck, *Albert Gallatin Brown: Radical Southern Nationalist* (New York, 1937), pp. 192-200; Cole, *Whig Party in the South*, pp. 336-340.

the Empire State of the South might again have led the cotton states away from disunion, as in 1851. But they, together with T. R. R. Cobb and Governor Joseph E. Brown, were the chief reliance of the uncompromising Breckinridge Democrats, insisting on victory of the slave-code candidate or disunion.¹⁹

Even Alabama, Yancey's state, had a vigorous Unionist party, deriving its strength from the Northern counties, which opposed immediate secession and urged a Southern convention. Though in the vanguard for Southern rights in the early months of 1860, Alabama was clearly awaiting the lead of another state.²⁰ Only in South Carolina were the Unionists too weak to organize a party. Perry fought disunion within the ranks of the faction that was branded with disunion by the other factions in the South. But, in supporting Breckinridge, he was striving to unite the South on one candidate to prevent paralyzing its vote. On the same principle, he urged no Breckinridge ticket in the North, as it would throw the vote to Lincoln instead of Douglas there. His aim was to secure Democratic victory.²¹

In July and August, Rhett and the *Mercury* continued their Union-saving strain to win public confidence in preparation for the cataclysm of November.²² But as they saw Lincoln's strength increasing, South Carolina congressmen began to agitate secession in event of Republican victory. L. M. Keitt, of Orangeburg, led off with a demand for the secession of South Carolina "alone if necessary and at all hazards." W. W. Boyce, of Richland, and W. P. Miles, of Charleston, were likewise

¹⁹ Ulrich B. Phillips, "Georgia and State Rights: a Study of the Political History of Georgia from the Revolution to the Civil War, with Particular Regard to Federal Relations," *American Historical Association Report*, 1901, II, 187-191; Henry Cleveland, *Alexander H. Stephens, in Public and Private, with Letters and Speeches, Before, During, and Since the War* (Philadelphia, 1866), pp. 142-148, 661-668, 674-694; Percy S. Flippin, *Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia: State Rights Unionist* (Richmond, 1931), pp. 96-151; Haywood J. Pearce, *Benjamin H. Hill: Secession and Reconstruction* (Chicago, 1928), pp. 37-40; Ulrich B. Phillips, *The Life of Robert Toombs* (New York, 1913), pp. 173-174.

²⁰ Dubose, *William L. Yancey*, pp. 539-549; C. P. Denman, *Secession Movement in Alabama*, pp. 84-100.

²¹ Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 176.

²² *Charleston Mercury*, August 10, 1860; Miles to Hammond, August 5, 1860, Hammond Papers.

ardent champions of prompt separate secession.²³ J. D. Ashmore of Anderson supported Breckinridge and Lane as "one more effort to preserve the Constitution and the Union," but strongly advocated co-operative secession of the South if Lincoln were elected.²⁴ Hammond, however, pursued the policy of quietude that he had advised, refraining from public addresses, but seeking by correspondence and consultation to guide the movement away from secession.²⁵ Late in July, Orr came out in a letter stating that disruption of the Democratic party had destroyed his hope of "preserving not only our rights, but the Union itself." Lincoln, the candidate of a party whose fundamental principle was "an open, undisguised, and declared war upon our social institutions," would be elected, he averred.

I believe that the honor and safety of the South, in that contingency, will require the prompt secession of the slaveholding States from the Union. . . . But whilst I think such would be the imperative duty of the South, I should emphatically reprobate and repudiate any scheme having for its object the separate secession of South Carolina; if Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi alone—giving us a portion of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, would unite with this State in a common secession upon the election of a Black Republican I would give my assent to the policy.²⁶

In several other public utterances during the next few months, Orr maintained his position of co-operative secession by the South. As the situation grew more dangerous in October, he deprecated calling a state convention, urging instead that commissioners be sent to other Southern states for consultation.²⁷

²³ Camden *Weekly Journal*, August 7, 28, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, August 8, 23, 1860; New York *Tribune*, July 25, 1860; Miles to Hammond, August 5, 1860, Hammond Papers.

²⁴ Ashmore to Hammond, July 10, 1860, Hammond Papers; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, July 19, 1860.

²⁵ Hammond to B. T. Watts, July 20, 1860, Watts Papers (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina); Hammond to J. T. Broyles, Anderson *Intelligencer*, quoted in Charleston *Courier*, August 25, 1860; New York *Tribune*, August 29, 1860.

²⁶ Orr to John Martin *et al.*, July 23, 1860, Anderson *Gazette*, quoted in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, August 9, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, August 4, 1860.

²⁷ Charleston *Courier*, August 13, 1860; Spartanburg *Express*, October 3, 1860; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, November 1, 1860.

There seemed to be an almost unanimous feeling in the state that Lincoln's election must be met by some form of resistance. The entire press advocated secession in that event, though warning against South Carolina's taking the lead and urging coercion with the South. The Charleston *Courier*, the most conservative newspaper, urged a convention of the Southern states "to present to the North the alternatives of a new and satisfactory understanding of our political compact, or a dissolution of the Union."²⁸ There was no Unionist newspaper to thwart the mounting sentiment for disunion. The voices of Carolina's wiser sons, raised through the columns of the *Southern Patriot* in 1851, were unheard in 1860.

Only Perry was bold enough to attack publicly the accepted creed that Lincoln's election would necessitate secession by the South. Knowing the unpopularity of his course, he nevertheless sent an article entitled "Disunion" to the Charleston *Courier*, requesting its publication on the ground: "You have said the columns of your paper were open to a free discussion of political questions." Forcefully he argued:

It would seem, from the recent publications of Messrs. Keitt, Orr and Boyce, that South Carolina will soon have to secede from the Federal Union, either alone or in company with the other Southern States, or a portion of them. These gentlemen declare that the election of Lincoln to the Presidency is certain—that on the happening of such an event, prompt and immediate secession of the Southern States must ensue.

Is the election of a Chief Magistrate of the Republic sufficient cause for the destruction of the Federal Government and all the horrors of civil war and revolution? . . . They who consider the union of the States an injury and a curse to the South, and are disunionists *per se*, will, of course, answer promptly in the affirmative. . . .

But there are others who think differently of the Federal Union. They have seen this American Republic, the only free government in the world, prosper and flourish as no government ever did in

²⁸ Charleston *Courier*, August 20, 1860; Columbia *South Carolinian*, quoted, *ibid.*, August 2, 1860; Charleston *Mercury*, August 10, 1860; Spartanburg *Express*, August 15, 1860; Camden *Weekly Journal*, August 14, 1860.

ancient or modern times. . . . During all this time every one has enjoyed the most perfect freedom and security in all his rights as a citizen. At home and abroad we have commanded the respect and admiration of the world. . . .

It is natural that they who thus reflect, and remember the farewell advice of the Father of his Country, *that union and liberty are inseparable*, who know from history, in all ages, the horrors of civil war, and the dangers of revolution to liberty and civil government, should wish and earnestly desire the perpetuity of the Republic, under which they live so happily. . . .

The probability is that the Black Republican candidate will be elected President of the United States. It is a grievous misfortune, and one to be deeply lamented by every citizen of the South. But it must be remembered that the Southern States will have brought this misfortune, grievous as it may be, on themselves, by their own divisions and party strifes. Nothing can be more clearly shown. It was predicted at the time and the South forewarned of the impending danger. . . .

If elected, Lincoln will come into power with two-thirds of the people of the United States opposed to his administration! This ought, in some measure, to appease the apprehensions of those who affect to be so much alarmed for the South. His administration will commence a weak one, and it is not probable that he can, backed by one-third of the people of the United States, seriously injure and oppress the other two-thirds.

But we have another check on his ability to do mischief. A majority of the Senate of the United States will be opposed to his administration. . . . More than likely the next election will give a majority of the members of the House in opposition to the Black Republicans. . . .

Mr. Fillmore became President of the United States with a worse record than Lincoln has on the slavery question, and he went out of office a very popular man at the South! . . .

Judging from the course pursued by other Presidents . . . it is likely Lincoln will pursue a very cautious, politic and wise course towards the South. It cannot be in the nature of any man elevated to the Presidency to wish to see the Government broken up under his Administration, the Republic dismembered, and the country plunged into a civil war. Very likely his great effort will be to acquire popularity in the Southern States, and appease their opposi-

tion by a rigid adherence to the Constitution and respect for the rights of the South. . . .

The election of President, in conformity with the Federal Constitution, is no ground whatever for breaking up the Republic, no matter how bitterly opposed to him we may be. We must wait and decide on his acts and measures; nothing less will justify us in the eyes of the world, or in the opinions of our people. . . .

Then the question arises, is it proper for South Carolina to take the initiative again in a disunion movement? Twice already has she failed, after marching boldly to the precipice and looking over. Nor has she won any laurels for wisdom and statesmanship in these threatened disruptions of her Government. . . .

. . . Now the election of Abe Lincoln will violate no Constitutional principle or provision of the Constitution. When such violation occurs under Lincoln's administration, the whole South may be united, and policy and patriotism dictate that we should wait till the violation occurs.

It may be that I am mistaken in supposing slavery to be out of the reach of the assaults of its foes, and if so I will be as ready as any one to defend it at the sacrifice of the Union itself, as much as I value the Union. But I am not willing to act prematurely when there is no danger. . . .

That all who were Disunionists should have rejoiced at the breaking up of the Democratic Convention in Charleston is very natural. They saw in that movement the destruction of the National Democracy and their defeat in the coming Presidential election. They saw in the future the election of a Black Republican, and knew what a powerful lever it would be in their hands to wield against the Union. But that any friend to the Federal Union and lover of the peace and quiet of the Republic should have rejoiced at such a dire calamity, is most amazing. . . .

Disunion . . . is now in the mouth of every flippant politician, certain newspaper editor, half-educated schoolboy, and unthinking mortal. It is the high road to office and popularity, and he who dare repeat the dying bequest of the Father of his Country is branded a traitor. The same feeling is manifested in the Northern States by the Black Republicans and John Brown sympathizers. Well may it be said, we have fallen on evil times; and that "those whom the gods intend to destroy, they first make mad."

To consummate this folly it is proposed for South Carolina to

march out of the Union solitary and alone. . . . Will the other Southern States rally to our assistance in doing that which they themselves think it advisable not to do? Would it not be more prudent to get them to unite with us beforehand? And if they will not unite in our action, for us to stay with them till some act is done which will unite the South?

. . . The proper course for South Carolina to pursue is to say to the other Southern States she is ready to act with them, and to await their action, whatever that may be. This will prevent her playing before high Heaven a ridiculous farce or a bloody tragedy.²⁹

In the South Carolina press the letter was universally condemned except by an occasional anonymous writer. But a prominent Charleston Secessionist wrote despairingly to Miles: "You will find many here who endorse Major Perrys views." Journals both North and South gave wide publicity to the article.³⁰ The Providence *Journal* hailed it with delight, and asked: "Are there not many men in Mr. Perry's State who share his sentiments? They have not been heard. They are not the talkers." The Cincinnati *Gazette* remarked: "Mr. Perry is a Democrat, yet retains a reasonable share of good sense, which may be partly due to the fact that he lives near the mountain regions of the state, where the air is purer and the land less darkened with slaves."³¹ In the *Courier* of August 24, "Many Citizens of Charleston" accused him of having changed his position drastically since his resolutions in the legislature denouncing the John Brown Raid. Perry published a strong denial, stating that he was still ready to dissolve connection with a people generally sympathizing with such an outrage, but that he believed nine tenths of the Northern people condemned it.

Believing this, as I most sincerely do, I am a Union man till the contrary offers, or until I see an overt action of treason against the

²⁹ "Disunion," August 13, 1860, Charleston *Courier*, August 20, 1860; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 171-180.

³⁰ Charleston *Courier*, August 27, 29, 1860; Spartanburg *Express*, September 12, 1860; Robert N. Gourdin to Miles, August 20, 1860, Miles Papers.

³¹ Quoted in Charleston *Courier*, August 29, 31, 1860.

Constitution and the South by those who control the Federal Government. I am unwilling to break up the Union on an uncertainty. I will take no counsel from base fear or cowardly apprehensions.³²

Petigru, O'Neill, and Hammond held the same view as Perry, though they made no public utterances. Petigru wrote to Alfred Huger: "No possible issue could be more untenable than to make his [Lincoln's] bare election a *causus belli*, without any overt act against the Constitution, or even the Dred Scott decision." O'Neill wrote to Hammond: "If the worst happens, (the election of Lincoln) *I would say wait*, let us see fully developed his course of action. I regard *secession*, as Revolution, exactly equal to that in '76. Have we any cause for that?" Hammond wrote I. W. Hayne that any movement in case of Lincoln's election, unless the South and West were behind it, would be "the weakest, most impolitic and assuredly abortive movement that So. Ca. had made yet." Though admitting the right of secession, he deplored its exercise over a presidential election, stating that general incompatibility had better be pleaded.³³

II

After attempts by the Douglas, Bell, and Breckinridge factions to unite on a fusion candidate had failed and the early elections had brought Republican victory in Pennsylvania and Indiana, it was almost certain that Lincoln would be elected. Feeling mounted over the South, and the radicals did everything in their power to keep it at fever heat. Yancey went on a "proselyting tour" of the North to portray to the Democrats the dire effect that Lincoln's election would have on the South, carefully refraining, however, from advocating secession. As Ruffin confided to his Diary, it would naturally follow as an alternative to "abolition domination." His fears that no state would take the lead were relieved by Governor Gist's assurance that South Carolina would secede alone if necessary.³⁴

³² *Ibid.*, August 29, 1860; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 180-185.

³³ Petigru to Alfred Huger, September 5, 1860, in Carson, *James Louis Petigru*, p. 356; O'Neill to Hammond, September 22, 1860, Perry Papers; Hammond to I. W. Hayne, September 19, 1860, *ibid.*

³⁴ New York *Tribune*, September 11, 18, 24-28, October 11, 15, 1860; Dubose, *William L. Yancey*, pp. 496-529; Ruffin Diary, II, October 12, 17, 1860.

In October South Carolina was being prepared for the crisis. Associations of "Minute Men" were formed in every district; their badge, the blue cockade, became a symbol of resistance. Torchlight processions added to the excitement. Governor Gist, in calling the extra session of the South Carolina legislature to appoint presidential electors, added the clause: "and also that they may, if advisable, take action for the safety and protection of the state." The *Mercury* on November 3, three days before the election, came out openly with its plan for the separate secession of South Carolina: it was time for action, since the Southern states were in the crisis of their fate; nothing was needed except to set the ball of revolution in motion; men of spirit in the South desired promptitude in South Carolina; the legislature should call a convention as early as possible.³⁵

Election for the legislature occurred on October 8 and 9, before excitement had reached its height. Attempts of the radicals to pledge the candidates to separate secession were unsuccessful. Questionnaires by anonymous writers asking nominees if they favored formation of a Southern confederacy in event of Lincoln's election, and if they would vote for calling a state convention to secede, received unsatisfactory response. Many candidates refused to reply, declaring the question premature. Whereas some of those committing themselves signified willingness to take the state out of the Union immediately and alone, most favored waiting for co-operation of other cotton states. The election was a decided victory for the latter group.³⁶ A Charleston Secessionist bemoaned that only four of the twenty men elected there were in favor of separate state action.³⁷ The *Courier* reported "remarkable unanimity"

³⁵ New York *Tribune*, October 22, 1860; New York *Herald*, October 27, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, October 15, 18, 25, November 1, 1860; Charleston *Mercury*, October 15, November 3, 1860; G. D. Tillman to Hammond, October 9, 1860, Hammond Papers.

³⁶ Charleston *Mercury*, September 26, 28, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, September 23, 26, 29, October 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 1860; New York *Tribune*, October 17, 1860; Lancaster *Ledger*, September 26, 1860; Keowee *Courier*, September 8, October 20, 1860; Camden *Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1860.

³⁷ Charleston correspondent, New York *Tribune*, October 17, 1860.

among the members-elect for "repellant or defensive action on the part of the South" if Lincoln were elected, but was pleased that they were chosen "without details of resistance pledged."³⁸

Perry did not run for re-election in Greenville, having written a public letter at the end of the preceding session signifying his determination to retire. Price, editor of the *Southern Enterprise*, and W. H. Campbell, former editor of the *Mountaineer*, both ardent Secessionists, were defeated in the race. The successful candidates were T. Edwin Ware for the Senate, and John W. Stokes, David Hoke, J. P. Hillhouse, and Dr. J. M. Sullivan for the House.³⁹

Undaunted by the rising storm, Perry continued to raise a lone voice against the angry feeling which was now sweeping even the conservative Fifth Congressional District. On October 10 he addressed a crowd of several hundred in the courthouse at Anderson. The Anderson *Intelligencer* reported:

His speech was certainly able and characterized with courtesy towards those with whom he differed. He is just as thoroughly convinced that he is right *now* as he ever was during the course of many years. He stands by the Union, "this great and glorious Union!" It has been some time since we heard panegyric bestowed upon "the American eagle" with such liberality. We conceive Maj. Perry to be honest, conscientious and independent withal, but in our humble judgment he is wrong. He was listened to by the large audience with interest and respectful attention, which we were pleased to observe, as his character and high toned bearing as a gentleman entitled him to such a reception. Applause was given frequently, but we could not discern that one-half present participated in such endorsement of his sentiments.⁴⁰

Two weeks later, during recess of court at Greenville, Orr and Ashmore were received with enthusiasm when they addressed a large gathering in favor of co-operative secession in event of Republican victory. Ashmore assailed Perry's argument that

³⁸ Editorial, October 13, 1860.

³⁹ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, December 22, 1859, September 13, October 11, 1860.

⁴⁰ October 11, 1860, quoted in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 18, 1860; Charleston *Courier*, October 24, 1860.

Lincoln might make a conservative President, designating him as a warm advocate of the "higher law" doctrines of the Abolition party. By the end of October, even Greenville, the old Unionist stronghold, had organized its company of Minute Men.⁴¹ On October 28 Petigru wrote to Edward Everett: "My own countrymen here in S. C. are distempered to a degree that makes them to a calm and impartial observer real objects of pity."⁴²

On November 5 the legislature met in special session to vote for presidential electors, since South Carolina, alone of all the states, had not given the election to the people. But it represented popular sentiment rather accurately when it chose a full slate of Breckinridge electors, for the strength of Douglas and Bell was negligible in the state. Governor Gist requested the legislature to remain in session and call a convention for secession in event of Republican victory, stating that the long-awaited co-operation seemed near at hand. He had received assurances of support from governors of several other cotton states. Co-operationists in the legislature, discrediting a Southern congress after the fiasco of 1852, were now encouraged to accept the radicals' view that immediate separate action was the surest way of obtaining co-operation. Numerous letters from public men throughout the South urged South Carolina to set the ball of revolution in motion; other states, they said, would follow.⁴³

Excitement prevailing in the capital also influenced moderates in the legislature. Each night Secessionist orators made flaming speeches to the populace. Congressmen Milledge L. Bonham, Keitt, and Boyce vied with each other in eloquent appeals for resistance by the Palmetto State. Especially delighted was the audience when Senator Chesnut took up the plea, for, like Hammond, he had maintained silence during the summer. Rhett was there to thrill them with his impas-

⁴¹ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, November 1, 1860; Spartanburg *Express*, October 31, 1860; New York *Tribune*, November 5, 1860.

⁴² Petigru Papers (Library of Congress).

⁴³ Charles E. Cauthen, "South Carolina's Decision to Lead the Secession Movement," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XVIII (October, 1941), 363-365.

sioned oratory. And Edmund Ruffin, after casting his vote against Lincoln in Virginia, hastened to Columbia. Responding to a serenade on the night of his arrival, he declared that only through the lead of South Carolina could the defense of the South be secured; old as he was, he had come to join them in that lead.⁴⁴

As soon as Lincoln's election was assured, resolutions for calling a convention were introduced in both houses. But though feeling ran high among the members, there was yet a strong current of opposition to separate action. Radicals proposed an early date for the convention, but conservative Charlestonians attempted to postpone it until the public mind had cooled, or until South Carolina had definite assurance of co-operation from some other Southern state. George A. Trenholm proposed sending a commissioner to Georgia to recommend simultaneous conventions.⁴⁵

Elections in the other slave states had shown Unionist sentiment ascendant. Though Breckinridge—candidate of Southern extremists—carried the electoral vote, he lacked nearly 124,000 of having a popular majority. The combined vote for the two compromise candidates, Douglas and Bell, exceeded that for Breckinridge even in the cotton states of Georgia and Louisiana, and failed only by a small margin in North Carolina. Yancey's state went for Breckinridge by a majority of only 7,355 out of a total of 90,307. The popular vote in 1860 was unquestionably in opposition to secession. Even many of Breckinridge's supporters, while campaigning for Southern rights, were strongly Unionist. Moderates in the other Southern states, as in South Carolina, urged consultation rather than separate action. But the day after the election Governor

⁴⁴ Charleston *Courier*, November 5-8, 1860; New York *Tribune*, November 8, 1860; McCarter, *Journal Kept at the South 1860-1866* (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress), I, 6-8; B. T. Watts to Hammond, [November] 1860, Watts Papers; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1860, pp. 10-11; Ruffin Diary, II, November 1, 7, 1860.

⁴⁵ South Carolina *House Journal*, 1860, pp. 18-19; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, 1860, pp. 14-15; Charleston *Courier*, November 8, 1860. For a full account of the resolutions offered, see Cauthen, "South Carolina's Decision to Lead the Secession Movement," *loc. cit.*, pp. 366-367.

Brown of Georgia gave a powerful impetus to the disunion movement by a special message to the legislature advocating a convention for separate secession. Prospect of early support from the pivotal state of the South strengthened the radicals in South Carolina.⁴⁶

Excitement increased when news came over the wires from Charleston of the dramatic resignation of A. G. Magrath, United States district judge, and James Conner, United States district attorney, in protest against Lincoln's election. Perry was attending court at Laurens when the message arrived. Immediately all in the court room, including the judge, sprang to their feet, exclaiming: "They did right!" Perry, standing erect, and towering above the others, said emphatically: "I say they did *wrong*, and it's on the road to ruin."⁴⁷ Popular demonstrations in Columbia following the resignations deeply affected the legislature. The Charleston delegation held a caucus to harmonize their differences and determined to support the unconditional call of a convention for separate action. That evening one of their former conservatives, W. D. Porter, president of the Senate, responded to the clamors of an excited throng with a speech for immediate secession. The following day, November 9, the delegation assisted in securing passage of the Buist convention bill, which set January 5 and 15 for election and assembling of the convention.⁴⁸

The radicals had urged earlier dates, fearing that delay in South Carolina would have a chilling effect on the other Southern states. Further encouraging news from Georgia and the pressure of public opinion in Charleston and Columbia caused the legislature to heed their advice. It was reported that Governor Brown's recommendation for a convention had

⁴⁶ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 182-186; New York *World Almanac*, 1922, p. 438; Phillips, "Georgia and State Rights," *loc. cit.*, pp. 191-194; Rainwater, *Mississippi: Storm Center of Secession 1856-1861*, pp. 161-167.

⁴⁷ Charleston *Courier*, November 8, 1860; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 601-602.

⁴⁸ McCarter Journal, I, 13; Ruffin Diary, November 8, 1860; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, 1860, pp. 16-20; Charleston *Courier*, November 9, 10, 16, 1860; New York *Tribune*, November 10, 14, 1860.

been enthusiastically received, that Federal officials in Georgia had resigned, and that Robert Toombs had tendered his resignation from the United States Senate. The Minute Men of Columbia passed resolutions urging an early convention. The *Mercury* reported general indignation among the people over delay. On November 9 a delegation of Savannah citizens participated in the celebration in Charleston of the completion of the railroad between the two cities. The meeting turned into a grand Secessionist rally, in which the visitors made stirring addresses pledging the co-operation of Georgia. Resolutions by L. W. Spratt were adopted, urging the legislature to call a convention for secession at the earliest moment and requesting the Charleston members to lay the matter before their respective houses. To add weight to the recommendation, a committee consisting of Magrath, Conner, and W. F. Colcock (United States customs collector, who had also resigned), was sent by special train to Columbia to confer with the Charleston delegation.⁴⁹

The legislature was profoundly affected by these developments. On November 10 the House committee reported the convention bill with the dates changed from January 8 and 15 to December 6 and 17. Representatives from the up country protested such haste, declaring that time was needed to bring the people "up to the point." A. P. Aldrich argued that the stand of Georgia gave assurance of the co-operation for which the state had been striving since 1828. John Cunningham, of Charleston, stated that South Carolina co-operationists should be satisfied, since Georgia, as well as Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, had indicated readiness to act. The bill passed both houses unanimously.⁵⁰

That evening at eight o'clock a throng of two thousand

⁴⁹ Charleston *Courier*, November 10, 1860; Cauthen, "South Carolina's Decision to Lead the Secession Movement," *loc. cit.*, pp. 369-370.

⁵⁰ South Carolina *House Journal*, 1860, pp. 33-35; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, 1860, p. 22; Charleston *Courier*, November 12, 1860; New York *Tribune*, November 12, 15, 1860. For a more detailed account of proceedings of the legislature and convention, see L. A. Kibler, "Unionist Sentiment in South Carolina in 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, IV (August, 1938), 355-358.

assembled in front of the Congaree House to serenade the committee from Charleston. Magrath expressed the profound thanks of the people of Charleston to the legislature for the early hour of deliverance. The gathering was turned into a gala occasion, with serenading, fireworks, and a parade of Minute Men. Charleston received news of passage of the convention bill with wild rejoicing. Next morning a large white banner with a palmetto tree on one side and a single star on the other, bearing the inscription, "S. C. has moved—other states will follow!" waved over East Bay. On the evening of November 12 a great public meeting in Institute Hall endorsed the action of the legislature. Magrath presided and made a stirring speech for separate secession. Rhett gave a fiery sketch of the wrongs endured by the South, and was received with "universal demonstrations of approval and applause." At last his policies were triumphant in the state.⁵¹

III

Within the next few weeks public meetings endorsing the action of the legislature were held in every district. Former party differences were forgotten in the eagerness to show loyalty to the state, for everyone assumed that South Carolina was now committed to secession. And developments in the other cotton states were encouraging. Governor Pettus of Mississippi called a special session of the legislature for November 26, which forthwith issued the call for a convention, to be elected on December 20 and convene on January 7. The Georgia legislature, disregarding the eloquent pleas of Stephens and Hill, called a convention on November 17, to be elected on January 2 and assemble on January 16.⁵²

Orr, speaking from the Congaree House balcony in Columbia to a great crowd assembled for the Agricultural Fair, said that South Carolina was united "from the mountains to the

⁵¹ Charleston *Courier*, November 12, 1860; Ruffin Diary, II, November 10, 13, 1860.

⁵² Phillips, "Georgia and State Rights," *loc. cit.*, pp. 194-199; Pearce, *Benjamin H. Hill*, pp. 40-46; Cleveland, *Alexander H. Stephens*, pp. 694-712; Rainwater, *Mississippi: Storm Center of Secession 1856-1861*, pp. 167-171.

seaboard" for secession; and that, if elected to the convention, he would vote for separate secession, since the South was now ready to endorse the action of South Carolina. Congressmen Ashmore and Keitt followed in ardent speeches for immediate action. Chesnut, Memminger, and Magrath also lent their oratorical talents to the secessionist cause, speaking in various towns of the up country. Hammond, however, declined numerous invitations, for he had steadfastly counseled against secession.⁵³

Ministers preached secession from their pulpits, and the press unanimously endorsed it, insisting that the convention must support the legislature. Said the *Camden Journal*: "S. C. is obliged to unfurl her banner and fling it to the breeze. . . . The die is cast." An unnatural excitement pervaded the up country as well as the low. As if in celebration of some gala holiday, jubilant crowds assembled to erect liberty poles and unfurl the Palmetto flag, which was greeted with volleys of musketry and cheers for the New Republic. Military bands and torchlight processions of Minute Men added to the excitement.⁵⁴

Perry was powerless to prevent the wild tide from engulfing his mountain district. Upon hearing of the convention call, citizens of West Greenville erected a liberty pole, from which floated a Palmetto banner with the inscription, "Secession." Price delightedly wrote in the *Southern Enterprise*: "There is No Union. . . . The die has been cast." Fifty prominent citizens of Greenville, among whom were J. W. Brooks and G. E. Elford, two of the Unionists who had assisted Perry in launching the *Southern Patriot* in 1851, signed the call for a public meeting on November 17 "to take into consideration matters of public interest now transpiring in the State growing

⁵³ Charleston *Courier*, November 16, 19, 21, 26, 1860; New York *Tribune*, November 30, 1860; *Keowee Courier*, December 1, 1860; Hammond to Legislative Committee, November 8, 1860, Hammond Papers; *idem* to Mitchell, *idem* to Simpson, November 22, 1860, *ibid*.

⁵⁴ Charleston *Courier*, November 23, December 6, 1860; Charleston *Mercury*, December 4, 1860; New York *Tribune*, December 18, 1860; Camden *Weekly Journal*, November 13, 1860.

out of the Election of a Black Republican to the Presidency of the United States." Price attempted to secure unanimous endorsement:

Party lines have now been obliterated—at least they should be—and all should unite in promoting the cause of resistance to Black Republican rule. . . . It is a meeting where cooperationists, secessionists, and those who have formerly been Union men, can, and we hope will meet and consult together.⁵⁵

On the appointed day a large crowd listened with "the warmest enthusiasm" to speeches advocating immediate secession. General W. K. Easley declared that the only hope of the South lay in secession:

The American Union has become thus sectionalized, and the Southern section constitutes the unhappy minority thus exposed to the mercy of the sectional majority . . . it behooves us as men who have not been born to this condition of servitude, to look around us for some means of escape from a situation so fraught with danger.

James C. Furman eloquently defended the right of secession, and other speakers made brief remarks favoring immediate action—among them Dr. A. B. Crook, G. F. Townes, Perry E. Duncan, Vardry McBee, C. J. Elford, and W. P. Price. J. W. Brooks was chairman of the meeting, and Ashmore one of the numerous vice-presidents. It was, indeed, a union of parties. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, It is now ascertained that *Abraham Lincoln* and *Hannibal Hamlin* have been elected President and Vice President of the United States, and it is well known that they regard the institution of slavery as a *moral, social and political evil*, and do not accede to the decision of the Supreme Court on the Dred Scott case: Therefore,

Resolved, That South Carolina should, as soon as possible, cut the last cord that binds her to her enemies, and declare herself free and independent as when she entered the Union. . . .

⁵⁵ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, November 15, 1860.

Resolved, That we approve and endorse the action of our Legislature, in the call of a Convention.

Furman, Easley, Duncan, W. H. Campbell, and Dr. James Harrison were nominated as delegates to the convention. Price thus commented on the nominees:

They are gentlemen well known in our District. If elected, they will reflect the highest honor and credit upon the District they represent. . . . We trust that there will be no other ticket in the field. There are other gentlemen among us whose attainments ably qualify them for the position. At the present time, however, we think that all personal preferences should be sacrificed for the purpose of securing unanimity and concord among our people.⁵⁶

Price, no doubt, still feared that the Unionists, under Perry's leadership, would rally. But Perry knew that the movement had passed beyond his control. Seated in his law office, directly opposite the courthouse, he witnessed the meeting, and thus described it five years later:

I saw a crowd of persons rushing in, composed of college boys, and their professors, merchants, mechanics, doctors, lawyers and idlers from the hotel, with a sprinkling of farmers and planters. Soon I heard the public speaking commence, and the air was rent with the wild and rapturous applause of the excited audience. The more extravagant the denunciations of the Union, the louder were the shouts of applause! I repeated in my heart the memorable words of Christ: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!" My mind was then filled with the worst forebodings as to the future. I thought I foresaw all the evils which have since befallen our beloved country. But my political influence was gone, and my voice was powerless to stay the angry and excited feelings of my fellow citizens.⁵⁷

Perry was shocked at the course of some of his friends, and wrote to ask Ashmore how he and Orr could have given in so readily to secession in Columbia. Ashmore's reply reveals the viewpoint of a South Carolina moderate who was swept into secession in 1860:

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, November 22, 1860.

⁵⁷ *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 230.

For myself My Dear Sir,—I have been driven in spite of myself in the course of the last 12 months to the conviction that it is utterly impossible for the North & South to live longer together under the same Government. It is not a Government of love & affection, but one of the most intense hatred between the sections. Lincoln could not be conservative if he would & I am compelled to believe he would not if he could. God knows it has caused me many & painful struggles & sleepless nights to come to such conclusions & if my life would restore the country to peace & harmony I believe that I have enough patriotism to sacrifice it. But the deed is done, the die is cast & the Union is already dissolved but in a mere matter of form. Fla. Ala. Ga. Miss. & Texas all go out. La. & Ark. will soon be with us. Then I trust in God that some mighty controlling spirit like that of Washington may arise & by a general convention of states once more re-organize the Union upon a solid & permanent basis, settling this & all other questions & if they fail to do this then even you I know will say that it is best for the South to govern the South. Others may doubt you & your patriotism My Dear Major, but I never have & when bold & gallant deeds are to be performed, when wise & fearless counsel is to be given I still look to you to come fully up to the occasion.

My very soul shrank with disgust & contempt from some men, (who have ever been clamorous for disunion) when in Columbia. They were trembling in their shoes & were exceedingly surprised to find that Orr & myself were ready for action. . . .

I need hardly add that Disunion is now a fixed fact. Nearly the entire Co-operation party of 1851 throughout the State have come into the movement & an ordinance of Secession will be passed before Christmas day. I shall wait in Washington until notified of it & then return immediately to the State. In the meantime it will afford me much pleasure to hear from you & often. My confidence in & respect for you cannot be shaken by differences of political opinions & if it turns out that you are right & I am wrong in this case, no man ever acknowledged an error more promptly than I shall mine.⁵⁸

Ashmore was employing careful tactics to swing the Unionist stronghold of the state into secession. On November 20 he wrote Miles from Anderson:

⁵⁸ November 19, 1860, Perry Papers.

Already have some of the most violent & ultra men seized upon the movement here to ride rough shod into power, & my task is & has been no small one to encounter their folly on the one side & Perrys course on the other. Throughout the whole Summer I have laboured incessantly to get our people up to the right mark. . . . Indeed I may safely say that I have done more work than any five men in the state & am likely to get the least credit for it. I still hope to carry my entire District.

He arranged a great mass meeting at Pendleton for November 23, inviting prominent Co-operationists of 1851 to speak. "The object is to carry Pickens where we have more tender footed voters than anywhere else & make the State a unit," he wrote.⁵⁹ He, Chesnut, Boyce, and Orr spoke on the occasion, advising prudent councils, but "prompt, decided action" by the state. Orr spoke with much feeling, saying that the long-looked-for co-operation of the Southern states was at hand, and that he would now vote for secession. He appealed to the nonslaveholding population by stating that if the Union continued, the slaves would eventually be freed and reduce the price of labor so low that the white man would be driven to the poor house or compelled to flee the country. His speech was greeted with rounds of applause. A barbecue and parade of Minute Men helped to bring the people "up to the right mark."⁶⁰

Meanwhile, the Secessionists were keeping Greenville keyed to the highest pitch. On November 19 a crowd of citizens, accompanied by the Greenville Brass Band, serenaded Henry Buist of Charleston, author of the convention bill, who was stopping at the Mansion House. From the front steps he delivered an earnest address for immediate secession. Other speakers followed in "forcible and eloquent" appeals. Two days later Memminger made a stirring address, contending that secession was a necessity for self-preservation and honor. A committee of Greenville citizens headed by Furman published a letter in the *Southern Enterprise*, portraying in ter-

⁵⁹ Ashmore to Miles, November 15, 20, 1860, Miles Papers.

⁶⁰ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, December 6, 1860.

rifing terms the danger of remaining in a Union dominated by Northern fanatics. "If you are tame enough to submit, Abolition preachers will be at hand to consummate the marriage of your daughters to black husbands!" they warned. Though, as "a wary man," Lincoln would not carry out a flagrantly overt act against slavery, he would "move on with a cold steadiness of purpose towards the projected end." On November 27 the citizens held a meeting in the courthouse to hear Magrath, who, in a fiery address, depicted the utter hopelessness of remaining in the Union:

In less than a century there will be forty millions of slaves in the South, and they must have no outlet? Thus shall we be hemmed in by a "wall of fire!"

. . . Shall we kneel down to Mr. Lincoln, and plead for an assurance of his favor? Perish the thought! Shall we petition Congress?—kiss the hem of Mr. Seward's garment?—Shall we look to the Supreme Court? . . . it is a broken reed. . . . Where is hope then? It is in ourselves!—How? By coming out of the Union—by immediate secession!"⁶¹

A week before the convention election, however, a reaction was beginning in Greenville. The following letter appeared in the *Southern Enterprise*:

MR. EDITOR—Allow us, through your paper, to suggest the propriety of calling on the Hon. B. F. Perry, to address the people of this District on Monday next, it being sale-day, concerning the action which the State is about to engage in. As a part of the voters of this District, we never can vote in favor of separate State action. We would also like to hear from any other gentlemen who are opposed to separate action.

Yours, A VOTER.

In the same issue was a notice inviting the people of the town and district to a meeting in the courthouse at noon on sales day "to devise some plan of operations for those especially whose minds are wavering and unsettled and undecided as to the most judicious course to be pursued in the present political crisis."⁶²

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, November 22, 29, 1860.

⁶² November 29, 1860.

The meeting thus hurriedly held only three days before the election decided to run a "Co-operation ticket," and nominated Perry, O'Neill, Dr. W. A. Mooney, T. C. Bolling, and J. P. Boyce, president of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Greenville. O'Neill, who was in Columbia, declined to be a candidate, remembering the arrogance with which the minority was treated in the nullification conventions. Boyce also declined. Perry allowed his name to remain on the ticket, but did not electioneer. The *Southern Enterprise* denounced the proceedings of "the submissionists" as shameful, and called upon the people to support the Resistance ticket. "It is not possible that Greenville will let a 'sub' slip into the Convention list—surely not!"⁶³

On election day the Secessionists won by a large majority, each of the five candidates receiving over 1300 votes. Perry headed the Opposition ticket with 225 votes; Mooney received 196, and Bolling 190.⁶⁴ It was the first time Perry had ever been defeated in Greenville District. He attributed the result to the haste with which the election was held. As in the precipitate convention election in 1851, a majority of the voters did not turn out. "The Union men thought it was a foregone conclusion that the State would secede, & it was not worth their while to go to the Polls," said Perry.⁶⁵ There was a light ballot throughout the state. "This was indeed an ominous sign, and so regarded at the time," wrote Perry years later. He was convinced that a majority of the people of South Carolina were, at heart, opposed to secession, but were afraid or ashamed to say so.⁶⁶

The Secessionist ticket won in every district, being in most instances unopposed. The campaign was held in the heyday of excitement before dissension had had time to develop. But

⁶³ *Ibid.*, December 6, 13, 20, 1860; John B. O'Neill to Perry, December 5, 1860, Perry Papers; Autobiography, 1874, p. 145.

⁶⁴ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, December 13, 1860. Returns show that O'Neill and Boyce withdrew from the race, contrary to long-accepted accounts that they and Perry were the three Unionist candidates (*ibid.*).

⁶⁵ Autobiography, 1874, p. 145.

⁶⁶ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 269.

there were evidences that a conservative reaction was slowly arising, especially in Charleston, where there was a rally against the Rhett clique and even talk of waiting for co-operation. The Charleston correspondent of the New York *Tribune* believed that a "positive Union party" would have developed in South Carolina if the election had occurred a week later. In Columbia, as well as Charleston, caution was rearing its head. Aldrich, attending the regular session of the legislature, wrote on December 6: "There is evidently a party here for delay, at least, it is so suspected, but they do not feel strong enough to speak out." Petigru also observed the undercurrent of discord beneath the seeming unanimity for secession, but feared the reaction would come too late. When the legislature refused to elect Rhett, the father of secession, governor, his followers felt rebuked. The conservatives pushed through the election of Francis Pickens, former National Democrat, who had made himself acceptable by a recent speech in Columbia for immediate secession.⁶⁷

But further exciting circumstances played into the hands of the advocates of immediate secession. When the convention delegates arrived in Columbia on December 16, they found the city alarmed over a smallpox epidemic. Two days earlier, after seven new cases had been reported by the Board of Health, the legislature had voted to adjourn to Charleston, though physicians had assured them there was no danger. The convention was also urged to remove to Charleston and had been extended an invitation to use the Hall of the South Carolina Institute.⁶⁸

A day or two before the convention opened, John A. Elmore, commissioner from Alabama, and Charles E. Hooker, commissioner from Mississippi, had arrived in Columbia to

⁶⁷ Charleston *Courier*, November 29, December 10, 12, 13, 15, 1860; New York *Tribune*, December 11, 1860; Aldrich to Hammond, December 6, 1860, Hammond Papers; Petigru to Mrs. Jane Petigru North, December 6, 1860, in Carson, *Petigru*, p. 362; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1860, pp. 172, 201; Ruffin Diary, II, December 17, 1860; White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett*, pp. 182-186.

⁶⁸ Charleston *Courier*, November 27-30, December 7, 12, 15, 17, 18, 1860; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1860, p. 214; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, 1860, p. 119.

urge South Carolina to secede at once. They conferred with the delegates as they arrived at the hotels. Howell Cobb, of Georgia, was also present to strengthen the secessionist cause.⁶⁹ Undoubtedly, the fact that the other cotton states were fired to the point of pledging support gave South Carolina courage to do in 1860 what she had not dared in 1851. As Perry later observed: "It is not at all probable that the publication of a Union Paper in 1860 could have prevented the State from Seceding at that time. The other Southern States had become excited & encouraged South Carolina to lead off in the dreadful issue."⁷⁰

When the convention opened in the Baptist Church on Monday morning, the president, D. F. Jamison, of Barnwell, urged the delegates to withdraw South Carolina from the Union as speedily as possible, saying he would regard it the greatest honor of his life to sign the Ordinance of Secession as their presiding officer. Since the Board of Health had announced fourteen new cases of smallpox the preceding day, a resolution was immediately introduced to adjourn to Charleston. Though Miles insisted that they should pass the ordinance first and then talk of adjournment, since it would put a damper on the hopes of the South if they ran away from smallpox, the resolution was adopted. At the evening session, however, after ardent promises of support from the Alabama and Mississippi commissioners, the convention unanimously adopted a resolution that South Carolina should forthwith secede and that a committee be appointed to draft the ordinance. The haste with which the convention committed itself to secession was attributed by the Charleston correspondent of the New York *Tribune* to the policy of Jamison in framing the committees to "facilitate precipitation." With another

⁶⁹ John A. Elmore to His Excellency A. B. Moore, January 5, 1861, in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. IV, Vol. I, pp. 19-20; Charleston *Courier*, December 17, 1860.

⁷⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 152.

presiding officer, he maintained, there would have been a "delay of days or possibly weeks."⁷¹

When the convention delegates arrived in Charleston at one o'clock the following afternoon, they were welcomed with wild rejoicing by the populace. Citadel cadets were lined up at the station, and military companies escorted them to the Mills House. When the afternoon session opened at Institute Hall, noisy throngs in the galleries interrupted the proceedings with frequent applause. Next day the sessions were moved to St. Andrews Hall, which was of such limited size that visitors were excluded. But excited crowds filled the lobbies, halls, and staircases outside the auditorium. On December 20 John A. Inglis, chairman of the committee to draft the Ordinance of Secession, read his report, which was unanimously adopted. Signing was postponed, however, for a formal ceremony at Institute Hall in the evening. There, in the presence of the legislature, Governor Pickens, and a densely packed audience, the delegates signed the Ordinance, each being greeted with cheers, waving of handkerchiefs, and stormy applause.⁷²

But many felt that the hour was intensely solemn. Rhett's crusade for disunion was finally victorious; but as he knelt and bowed his head in silent prayer before signing the fatal document, there was scarcely a dry eye in the audience. That night there were ringing of bells, firing of cannon, drinking, and shouting in Charleston. But Petigru said sadly to a friend, "I have seen the last happy day of my life."⁷³

⁷¹ *Charleston Courier*, December 17, 18, 1860; *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1860-1861 (Charleston, 1861), pp. 3-5, 10, 12, 13; *New York Tribune*, December 25, 1860.

⁷² *Charleston Courier*, December 19-21, 1860; *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1860-1861, pp. 43-49.

⁷³ Report of Mrs. F. G. deFontaine, in Yates Snowden and H. G. Cutler (eds.), *History of South Carolina* (Chicago and New York, 1920), II, 664; Aldrich to Hammond, December 21, 1860, Hammond Papers; *Memorial of the Late James L. Petigru, Proceedings of the Bar of Charleston, S. C., March 25, 1863* (New York, 1866), pp. 3-4.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Loyal Confederate

IN JANUARY six other cotton states followed South Carolina out of the Union. On February 10 Perry unburdened his heavy heart in his Journal:

More than two years have elapsed since I wrote in this Journal. And Oh how great have been my afflictions during that period—I was not able to record them as they occurred and abandoned the habit of writing in my Journal. They are still too painful to recall to my memory. Time has not soothed my grief & sorrow at the loss of my beloved children the pride of my heart. If ever a parent loved his children and grieved for the loss I have. . . . Oh God have mercy on me & give me strength to bear this heavy, heart-rending affliction. . . . But my heart feels too deeply, & my tears are now flowing too rapidly to dwell on this great affliction. I can not endure the thought of sketching their characters or writing about them.

These two years seem to me more like a dream & I dislike to review them & note anything that has taken place. My heart has been rent by another affliction, which I must feel more deeply than I can express as a man & a patriot. It is the destruction of my country, the dismemberment of that great & glorious Union, cemented by the blood of our fathers. The American People seem demented. Nothing in History equals it. They are exulting over the destruction of the best and wisest form of Government ever vouched by God to man. Fools & wicked fools they know not what they do & may God forgive them. I can not think or write about this subject with any degree of patience or forbearance. In this suicidal step, I see the loss of liberty, the loss of happiness & the loss of country. What will be the result God only knows. The advice of Washington & the voice of honor have been set at naught.¹

¹ 11, February 10, 1861.

But when civil war came, not for a moment did Perry hesitate to go with his state. Since early manhood he had believed that a man's patriotism should begin at home. To the query, "What, and where is our country?" he had answered:

Our country is emphatically South Carolina first, and the United States of America next. . . . Whenever we shall see our own native State engaged in a deadly contest with any other power, we will not stop to inquire whether she is in "the right or in the wrong." It will always be enough for us to know that our own immediate country is endangered and requires our assistance. How could we—how can any honorable man live among a people and fight against them for others at a distance. . . .

As we before said, it is the bounden duty of every man, to do all that he possibly can, to prevent his country from going wrong. When he has done this, and finds that it avails nothing, then let him go heart and hand *with* his country, although in a wrong cause. Let him sink or fall with her, and never rise upon her ruins.²

Such was also his attitude in 1860.³ When secession was assured, he said to Petigru: "I have been trying for the last thirty years to save the State from the horrors of disunion. They are now all going to the devil, and I will go with them."⁴

To his eldest son, who had been graduated with honor from Harvard in 1859 and was now practicing law with him, he said: "You must volunteer your services in defence of your State." Willie replied: "I have already done so."⁵ He had joined the Brooks Cavalry, a troop composed of young lawyers, doctors, college graduates, planters, merchants, and mechanics from the district.⁶ Perry wrote in his Journal: "That *my son* should ever fight against the Union is what I never expected. But I may have to do so myself. The dire necessity of self defence [has] fallen on South Carolina & we must defend our independence & Liberty."⁷

² Editorial, "Our Country," *Greenville Mountaineer*, June 11, 1830.

³ Autobiography, 1874, p. 144.

⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), p. 260.

⁵ *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, December 13, 1860; Autobiography, 1874, p. 175; Journal, II, March 10, 1861.

⁶ Speech of Perry at Greenville Public Meeting, May 20, 1861, Perry Scrap Book.

⁷ II, June 2, 1861.

On May 20 a public meeting was held in Greenville to raise money for equipping the Brooks Cavalry and aiding needy families of men who had joined the army. Perry thus addressed the assemblage:

It is known to you, fellow citizens, that I have not attended, for many months past, any of your political meetings. It is known to you, also, that I was opposed to this great movement which has been made throughout the Southern States. I saw that the movement would be made in South Carolina, and I thought it my duty, as a good citizen, to step aside and make no division in the State. I have done so.

We are now, fellow citizens, in the midst of a revolution, destined to be a long and bloody one. I have not been disappointed in any of the consequences of secession. I foresaw them and foretold them. I knew it was not in the nature of human affairs that a great country and great government like ours, could be dissolved and broken up, without bloodshed, and a terrible, ruinous struggle! In all history there is no instance of a great movement like this being peaceable. The fierce and angry and wicked passions of men forbid it in all ages and in all countries. But we are now in this Revolutionary struggle, and can take no step backward. We must fight out of it. Every good citizen, no matter what may have been, heretofore, his political creeds, must come forward and pledge his life, his fortune and his honor to the issue! . . .

Greenville has already sent forth three companies of volunteers, and has three more at home ready organized for the field. . . .

I hope, fellow citizens, that we shall now be able to send forth a troop of Cavalry which will do credit to the District and to the volunteer service. It is known to you that Col. Wade Hampton has been authorized by the President of the Confederate States to raise a Legion for twelve months. . . . He will not only make a spirited and wise commander in battle, but a kind and protecting father to his Legion, throughout the campaign. . . .

This Legion will be composed of the chivalry of the State, and will be called into immediate action in the field. I am anxious to see the "Brooks Troop" attached to this Legion. I think they will do honor to the Legion, and to their country in the hour of battle. . . .

But this Troop is not yet full, and every young man who is

ambitious of fame or distinction, and who desires to serve his country, should step forward and join it. He cannot be in a better position in the Confederate Army. . . .

But, fellow citizens, we want horses, arms and equipment for this Troop of Cavalry. . . . You must not hesitate to contribute liberally for this purpose. They go forth to fight your battles, to risk their lives, and perhaps die in your service. Can you refuse to fit them out? . . .

This contest is to be one of blood, and continued for years. . . . I have no fears of being conquered by the North. It is impossible that a free people, imbued with courage and the hope of liberty, like the Southern people are, can be conquered, and if conquered, they cannot be held in subjection by all the powers of the earth. . . .

It is true, the North has more men and more money than we have, but this difference is more than counterbalanced by the fact that we are fighting for our homes, our independence and liberty, whilst they will be fighting to subdue and rob and murder a free people. . . .

As an old Union man, I give to this Brooks Cavalry my son, two horses and a Negro boy, and fifty dollars, for the support of necessitous families of soldiers. I hope no secessionist, who wore in peace his blue cockade, ready to march at a moment's warning, will refuse to do less, now that war has come upon us. And furthermore, I tender my own services, whenever the occasion requires them.⁸

Wade Hampton, who, under Confederate authority, was raising a legion consisting of infantry, artillery, and cavalry for twelve months' service, accepted the troop and came to Greenville to inspect them. He spent two days with Perry. Early in June the Brooks Cavalry joined the Hampton Legion in Columbia, where Perry visited them before they departed for Virginia.⁹

In the exciting days following secession, the state had responded with alacrity to the call for volunteers. On December 17 the legislature had passed a bill authorizing the Governor to call into active twelve months' service volunteer com-

⁸ Perry Scrap Book.

⁹ Journal, II, May 26, June 13, 25, 1861; Wade Hampton to Perry, May 12, 20, 1861, Perry Papers; Cook, *James C. Furman*, pp. 203-204.

panies from the militia and any other volunteer organization offered as a unit with its full complement of officers and men. On January 1, after the occupation of Fort Sumter by Major Anderson, the Convention authorized the Governor to enlist volunteer companies for six months' service for the relief of Charleston. Under the latter act Governor Pickens raised the "First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers," under command of Maxcy Gregg. Under the act of December 17, he appointed Milledge L. Bonham, of Edgefield, major general in command of the "Volunteer Forces of South Carolina," which numbered 8,835 by March 6. At Pickens's request the Convention and legislature also authorized the formation of regiments of regular army troops. When, soon after the fall of Fort Sumter, President Davis called on South Carolina for 8,000 men for the provisional army of the Confederacy, nearly all the twelve-month troops and Gregg's regiment of six-month volunteers enlisted. Davis's call in June and July for six regiments for the duration of the war did not receive quite so eager a response, but by November nineteen South Carolina regiments were in Confederate service—many of them in Virginia.¹⁰

When the call for volunteers was issued, the upper part of Greenville District—always strongly Unionist—was confused and hesitant. Aware of his great influence, Perry rode up and addressed several hundred men at a militia muster, urging them to offer their services when called upon. He told them that no man in South Carolina had been more opposed to secession than he, but the whole state, "with a unanimity never before witnessed," had thought differently. Since this was the case, they had no other country or government than that of South Carolina to look to for protection, and must sustain and defend her. They responded enthusiastically, forming two volunteer companies, two thirds of whom were old Union men.¹¹

¹⁰ Charles E. Cauthen, "Secession and Civil War in South Carolina" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1937), pp. 169-202; A. S. Salley, Jr. (comp.), *South Carolina Troops in Confederate Service* (Columbia, 1913), I, 1-4, 211-215, 429-433, II, 1-9, 284-289, 570-571, III, 3-6.

¹¹ Speech of Perry, May 20, 1861, Perry Scrap Book.

Thereafter Perry was often pressed into service by those seeking enlistments of the mountain men. In August he went with Samuel Townes to Pine Mountain and made a speech in favor of forming a volunteer company. A little later he addressed the men of the Dark Corner—the firmest Union stronghold of the district—but, according to Furman, without success. In October, called upon by Julius P. Alston, of Charleston, to aid in recruiting a company of artillery in the upper part of the district, Perry cheerfully did so. When, after the disasters of 1863, more volunteer state troops became imperative, it was he whom Governor Milledge L. Bonham called upon to secure enlistments in Greenville.¹²

During the early years of the war, Greenville, as well as the other mountain districts of the state, furnished many good companies for the army. Its martial spirit equaled that of any other district of the state. By the end of May, 1865, Greenville had organized six volunteer companies, three of which were in the field. During the summer and early fall, the "McCullough Lions," "Croft's Mountain Rangers," the "Furman Guards," the "Tyger Volunteers," the "Carolina Mountaineers," and many others were organized; and the ladies were advertising fairs in various communities to raise money for equipping "our brave volunteers."¹³ Perry was offered command of two of the companies, but declined, knowing that he was not able to go to war on foot. "I am no military man & too old to become one," he wrote.¹⁴ But when, a few months later, volunteer companies of the district proposed forming a Greenville regiment, Perry consented to accept its command if tendered him.¹⁵ He wrote in his Journal:

I feel that when my country calls on me for service I can not refuse. I am no military man, but I suppose I can prepare myself like others for the position.

¹² Journal, II, June 2, August 4, 1861; F. J. Withers to Perry, February 10, 1861, Perry Papers; W. Alston Hayne to *idem*, October 4, 1861, *ibid.*; M. L. Bonham to *idem*, September 4, 1863, *ibid.*; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 10, 17, 1861; Cook, *James C. Furman*, p. 206.

¹³ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 10, 17, 24, 1861.

¹⁴ Journal, II, July 25, 1861.

¹⁵ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 31, 1861.

I have had nothing to do in producing the terrible calamities which now overwhelm the State. They have come on us by the acts of others. But I am bound by patriotism & honor to defend my country right or wrong. This I will do though I have no hopes of prosperity & happiness for my country ever again. We are a ruined people!¹⁶

He became interested in the study of military tactics, but the regiment did not materialize.¹⁷ When the Federal forces were besieging Charleston in 1863, however, and the state seemed endangered, Perry was instrumental in having a meeting of Greenville citizens organize two companies for home defense. He was made second lieutenant of the Mounted Riflemen.¹⁸

II

Perry's most important service to the Confederacy, however, was rendered in civil office. In March, 1862, he was appointed district attorney and immediately became busily engaged in issuing cases under the Confiscation Act, which provided for the sequestration of debts and property belonging to alien enemies in the Confederacy. He confiscated much Northern property for the state. Confederate court, presided over by Judge A. G. Magrath, was held in Greenville every February and August. At the first term Perry prosecuted enough aliens to make "a handsome sum" in fees. Much litigation was involved in determining the status of business firms composed of both Northern and Confederate members and in proving that owners of real estate who claimed to be citizens of the Confederacy were actually aliens. In 1862, after the Executive Council of South Carolina, in the interest of food conservation, had prohibited liquor distillation except in fulfilment of contracts with the Confederate Government, Perry spent a laborious week in court prosecuting four or five hundred offenders.¹⁹

¹⁶ II, December 22, 1861.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, January 19, 1862.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, July 11, 1863; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, June 18, July 2, 1863.

¹⁹ Journal, II, April 19, August 12, 1862, February 24, 1863; Autobiography, 1874, p. 147; Armistead Burt to Perry, January 26, July 30, 1863, November 17, 1864, Perry Papers; A. G. Magrath to *idem*, August 23, 1863, *ibid.*; Perry to Burt, January 8, August 2, 1863, *ibid.*

In the fall of 1862 Perry was elected to the state legislature in a campaign which returned ninety-six new members in protest against domination of the state government by the Convention and its appointed Executive Council. When the sea islands had been captured by the Northerners in November, 1861, and the Governor's call for volunteers for defense had met a languid response, the Convention had reassembled and decreed that executive power should be exercised by a council of five members—the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, and three members to be appointed by the Convention—who were to have almost unlimited war powers in the state. Though the drastic measure was justified by President Jamison as a necessity for meeting the critical situation caused by Federal invasion, scarcity of goods, and rising prices, the real explanation was widespread lack of confidence in Governor Pickens's ability. Throughout 1862 the Executive Council took energetic and effective measures to defend the state. The three elected members, James Chesnut, I. W. Hayne, and W. H. Gist, were men of ability and experience in public affairs. They hastened volunteering by announcing that state conscription of men between eighteen and forty-five (with provision for exemptions and substitutes) would be effective on March 20. Chesnut's stirring appeal for volunteers, aided by the desire of many to escape the odium of conscription, caused the state's quota to be exceeded by more than four thousand by the end of April. When the Confederate Government passed its first conscription act in 1862, the Executive Council enforced it rigidly. In order to build coastal defense works, the Council also instituted a state-wide system of impressment of Negro labor, which was bitterly opposed by the planters. Such stern measures caused a natural revulsion against the Council, originating with Pickens's friends. By the summer and fall of 1862, an active campaign was being waged to overthrow the Convention and Council, which were attacked as "tyrants" and "usurpers" threatening the liberties of the people. Submitting to public pressure, the Convention reassembled on

September 9 and decreed its own dissolution for December 17, but left the fate of the Executive Council to be decided by the legislature.²⁰

Perry had been opposed to the absolute rule of the Council and wrote in his Journal after the Convention decree in September: "I feel glad that we have got rid of this revolutionary despotism the Convention—and I am most happy to see that the spirit of liberty is not yet dead with the people in South Carolina." He did not wish to re-enter politics, however, and consented to become a legislative candidate only from a sense of duty. He wrote:

I have had no agency in bringing this most destructive war upon the country. I know it must result in wide spread ruin. And now that it has come I can not remedy it in the Legislature. But it is my duty to serve my state in disaster as well as in prosperity. What I can do I will do to avert the crises which now surround her. We are fighting for our existence as a people.

When he was elected by a vote nearly double that of any other candidate, he wrote: "This is very gratifying when I know that it is the peace will offering of the people."²¹

The election showed a sharp reaction against the old Secessionist leaders of the state: the conservatives won by a large majority. The legislature proceeded forthwith to carry out the people's mandate by abolishing the Executive Council and declaring all its acts invalid. Furthermore, it angrily arraigned the Convention for its dictatorial rule. A few members rose in its defense, pleading that justice be tempered with mercy; but they received scant attention. Perry expressed regret to see so much feeling and excitement displayed, but joined in the vote of censure passed on the conduct of the Convention.²²

²⁰ Laura A. White, "The Fate of Calhoun's Sovereign Convention in South Carolina," *American Historical Review*, XXXIV (July, 1929), 757-771; Cauthen, "Secession and Civil War in South Carolina," pp. 103-249.

²¹ Journal, II, September 21, October 12, 26, 1862; A. Burt to Perry, November 17, 1864, Perry Papers.

²² White, "The Fate of Calhoun's Sovereign Convention in South Carolina," *loc. cit.*, pp. 770-771; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, January 1, 1863; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1862, pp. 73, 80, 96-98, 100-101, 147.

The old Unionists now became prominent in the state. Perry had been generally spoken of for Speaker of the House before the legislature convened, and ran A. P. Aldrich a close race when the ballot was taken. He was also urged by his Charleston friends to allow his name to be used as a candidate for governor. There was no one, wrote James B. Campbell, whose qualifications and position so entirely met "the requirements of the public good."

You would, I think, receive a good support from this region notwithstanding the established clanishness of Parish people.

The truth is, the Low Country people have yet a great deal to learn and I, for one, think the sooner they begin to be taught the better for them.

The next Governor must be from the upper country. . . .

Though gratified over these expressions of confidence, Perry did not push his candidature.²³

A scramble ensued for the governorship, which finally resulted in election of Milledge L. Bonham, then a member of the Confederate House of Representatives, who took vigorous measures to have South Carolina perform its full duty to the Confederacy. He attempted to get a more effective law for drafting slave labor, but the legislature still limited service to thirty days and allowed planters exemption upon payment of fines. He called a special session in April to restrict planting of cotton and prohibit distillation of liquor. The legislature limited the culture of cotton to one acre to the hand and revoked all licenses to distill. Perry introduced a bill to limit the prices of necessities; it was passed by the House, but defeated in the Senate.²⁴

During the last two years of the war, however, South Carolina, while officially co-operating with the Confederate Government, was increasingly hostile. In the first two years it had

²³ Journal, II, October 26, 1862; James B. Campbell to Perry, November 6, 1862, Perry Papers; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1862, p. 5.

²⁴ Journal, II, October 26, 1862, April 19, 1863; Cauthen, "Secession and Civil War in South Carolina," pp. 254-268; South Carolina *House Journal*, 1862, pp. 391-392, 395-399.

loyally supported Davis despite the campaign of Rhett and the *Mercury* against him. But the military reverses of 1863 shook the faith of Carolinians in the President and rendered enforcement of the Confederate conscription law more and more difficult. With Sherman at Savannah in 1864 and with no response to their plea for re-enforcements, they lost all confidence in the ability or willingness of the Confederate Government to protect them. Responding to the recommendation of Governor Bonham, the legislature took steps to provide its own defense by declaring militia forces, state officers, and all others necessary for protection of the state exempt from Confederate service. Previously, after passage of the liberal Confederate exemption law of October, 1862, it had given up exemption under state law. In 1864 the *Courier* was the only pro-Davis newspaper in South Carolina, and Robert W. Barnwell the only South Carolina delegate in Congress who supported the President. Election of A. G. Magrath governor in December, 1864, marked the culmination of the anti-Davis, state rights reaction in South Carolina.²⁵

Another cause of the growing discontent of South Carolina with the Davis government was the Impressment Act passed by the Confederate Government in March, 1863, to secure provisions and supplies for the armies. Since producers were holding their goods because of rising prices, they resented being forced to sell at less than the market price. Perry and Alfred M. Martin, of Society Hill, were the two commissioners appointed to assess the value of produce in South Carolina.²⁶ Perry had been recommended to the Secretary of War by Orr and Barnwell, Confederate senators from the state. Orr wrote Perry:

We thought it required a man of high personal character—one of established reputation, a firm & just man—one who would do the Govt. and the citizen justice in this trying hour of extortion & scarcity—one who would not be swayed by popular clamor nor

²⁵ Cauthen, "Secession and Civil War in South Carolina," pp. 268-285, 305-360.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-304; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, April 30, 1863; Journal, II, May 3, 10, 1863; Autobiography, 1874, p. 147.

deny the citizen justice in assessing the price of his produce. In casting over the state we concurred in the opinion that you were the proper person to be appointed.²⁷

It proved a "very laborious & unthankful office," Perry later reported, though he felt that he and Martin discharged their duties to the satisfaction of the people.²⁸ Complaints arose that the commissioners had set prices at little more than half the market price, and that agents, for convenience, had impressed produce in regions where it was scarce, when they could have purchased it freely a short distance away. Farmers wrote of the hardship of being forced to sell their beeves on foot at a low net price, and thus deprive themselves of the hides and tallow so sorely needed. Others made charges—not well founded—that agents had ordered them not to dispose of their surplus produce, when many in the community were in want. A farmer from Cheraw remonstrated that while schedule rates on farm products were rigidly enforced, everything he had to buy could be obtained only at enormous price. In general, the chief complaint was low prices. But a conscript officer wrote to ask Perry's co-operation in fixing moderate prices for salt, since he regarded the men detailed from the army for its manufacture as soldiers performing their duty, and not as speculators on the necessities of life.²⁹

So persistent were the protests that Governor Bonham referred them to the legislature, which requested the Governor to add his appeal to theirs for reform. Bonham forwarded the resolutions, together with copies of citizens' complaints and circulars by some of the agents, to James A. Seddon, Secretary of War, who made a conciliatory reply. In October, 1863, a convention of commissioners was held in Augusta, Georgia,

²⁷ May 12, 1863, Perry Papers.

²⁸ Autobiography, 1874, p. 147.

²⁹ Journal, II, July 11, 1863; J. L. Orr to Perry, May 12, 1863, Perry Papers; Alfred M. Martin to *idem*, October 3, 1863, *ibid.*; D. L. Wardlaw to *idem*, September 6, 1864, *ibid.*; J. McM. Calmes to *idem*, December 8, 1864, *ibid.*; T. E. Powe to *idem*, January 3, 1865, *ibid.*; R. B. Boylston to Messrs. B. F. Perry and A. M. Martin, August 30, 1864, *ibid.*; *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. IV, Vol. III, pp. 404-405.

where prevailing conditions were discussed and recommendations made for improvement. Perry moved that uniform prices for wheat, flour, iron, whisky, brandy, cotton cloths, spun yarn, sugar, coffee, and tea be established in all the states, but no action was taken. His resolutions as a member of the committee to prepare business, however, were unanimously adopted. They first recommended that the Secretary of War stop Confederate agents from purchasing articles for the army at higher prices than those adopted by the commissioners; next, that agents exercise "a prudent discretion" and impress in those sections where food and forage were most abundant, accepting tithes in money where the provision crop was short; lastly, that the price of any article be limited to 75 per cent above its cost of production.³⁰

In January, 1865, Perry was appointed district judge by President Davis. He was recommended by a majority of the South Carolina legislature, and endorsed by Orr, Barnwell, and three of the Confederate congressmen. Barnwell called on Davis in Perry's behalf, as did James Farrow, who told the President that Perry had not been appointed to the bench in his own state solely because of the parish system of representation. But Perry presided over only one court, held at Greenville. When the time arrived for the next session in Columbia, Sherman had laid the city in ashes, and Lee had surrendered.³¹

III

Perry lived under a terrific mental and emotional strain during the war. Exerting every ounce of energy to win the conflict he had so courageously opposed, he had many bitter reflections. Only by reading the fervid outpourings in his Journal can one understand his tragic position. Outwardly one of the most loyal of Confederates, he suffered much inner

³⁰ *Official Records*, Ser. IV, Vol. III, pp. 404-415, Vol. II, pp. 863, 898-906.

³¹ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 147-148; R. W. Barnwell to Perry, December 24, 1864, Perry Papers; James Farrow to *idem*, December 30, 1864, *ibid.*; James L. Orr to *idem*, February 17, 1865, *ibid.*; telegram of George Davis, Atty. Gen., to *idem*, n.d., *ibid.*; W. F. deSaussure to *idem*, April 25, May 3, 1865, *ibid.*; Thos. J. Semmes to *idem*, January 28, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

anguish of soul. Never did he become reconciled to the war. While always believing that the Southern people had committed an act of "folly and madness without cause" in seceding, he condemned the North for resorting to arms. He wrote in July, 1862:

Notwithstanding I honestly thought this Revolution premature and uncalled for because the South had been beaten in a Presidential Election, I must say that the course of the Northern States in trying to reverse the principles announced in the American Declaration of Independence and their attempt to subvert the basis of self government by our subjugation is the most diabolical national crime ever committed by a civilized & Christian people. If there is justice & right in God it can not prosper & be successful. Ten millions of people compact and united have a right to govern themselves as they please, no matter how foolish or wicked their government may be.³²

His horror over the fratricidal character of the war was fervently expressed.³³ Though his sympathies were wholly with the South, he wrote after Manassas:

What a horrid thing war is! How dreadful to be killing & slaughtering one another. How unchristian & inhuman! What monstrous folly & wickedness. And yet zealous Christians are engaged in it!

We are in the war & must fight out of it. The South must defend herself. But the bloody contest ought to have been avoided. I think it might have been. But passion & fanaticism have seized the public mind North & South. No one would listen to the voice of reason, to the voice of patriotism, the voice of Christianity & humanity! A wild delirium governs. Nothing can be more stupid & wicked than the notion the North has of whipping us back into the Union & subjugating us as a people! The thing is utterly impossible. Ten millions of people scattered over tens of thousands of miles can not be conquered & held in subjection.

The North was very wicked foolish & fanatical in waging war as it did for the last thirty years against slavery. The South was silly in permitting herself to be so much excited by the North on

³² Journal, II, July 20, 1862.

³³ *Ibid.*, June 13, 1861.

this subject. There was no danger to slavery. The dissolution of the Union was a monstrous suicidal folly on the part of the South—But when the act was committed by Eight or ten States, it was shere madness & wickedness & stupidity on the part of the North to think they could prevent it by war—Every blow struck made the break more incurable.³⁴

In the first part of the war Perry was confident that the South would triumph. "Really the Yanks ought to see that subjugation is impracticable," he wrote. "Men fighting for their homes & Independence & liberty are not easily whipped."³⁵ Yet, whether the North or South was victorious, he saw only ruin ahead—the end of republican government and the rise of military despotism. He never ceased to bemoan the destruction of the Union. No one except a few friends who felt as he did, such as O'Neill, Petigru, and O'Hanlon, knew the depth of his despair. Some consolation it was to correspond and converse with them, but the two former died in the midst of the war.³⁶ Perry wrote in his Journal in November, 1861:

All my predictions as to disunion are being fulfilled. The country is ruined, & the future has nothing but an interminable war or subjugation! . . . How blind, how foolish the Southern people were in rushing into this Revolution unprepared & without sufficient justification. They ought to have waited & seen whether those dangers which they expected & which I knew would not happen did come. In the mean time they could have prepared for the issue by preparing guns & ammunition & training & disciplining their troops.

After the Emancipation Proclamation had ended hope of European intervention, Perry wrote:

What will become of the country! Shall we fight till all are killed! No hope of peace yet! . . .

³⁴ *Ibid.*, August 4, 1861.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1861.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, July 21, September 18, October 13, November 10, 1861, February 16, September 14, 1862, February 24, March 19, 1863; John B. O'Neill to Perry, May 7, 18, October 10, 16, 1861, March 18, 1862, Perry Papers; James O'Hanlon to *idem*, December 1, 15, 1863, *ibid.*

I never had much faith in European intervention. Nor have I much in the boasted disaffection of the North West. We deceive ourselves first with one delusion & then another. Cotton was king & the world could not get on without us! England would remove the blockade. There would be no war! the Yankees were all cowards! I never had any faith in these assertions.

. . . Everything has an end & I suppose this war must have an end—But the country is ruined & I fear we will starve. Never did a man see into the future with more clearness than I have but nobody credited me! I foretold all the evils we have suffered & experienced! I knew that peace prosperity & happiness depended on our National Union—and that war and ruin would follow in the footsteps of disunion.³⁷

Perry bitterly condemned the Secessionists who did not participate in the war. After the bloody Battle of Manassas he wrote:

I have opposed the fatal conflict for thirty years—But it has come, and now I must take sides with my section & country & help them fight it out. . . . But men on both sides have brought it about & now these men are at home & not fighting! Shame & eternal dishonor to them. If I had raised my voice in favour of disunion I should feel myself utterly disgraced & dishonored if I did not fly to the camp, & fight as long as there was an enemy to be seen. How men who have been so active in bringing about disunion and civil war can reconcile it to their consciences to keep out of the death struggle is amazing to me! This is the case North & South!³⁸

Especially did he indict the clergy, newspaper editors, and politicians, who had been largely instrumental in bringing on the conflict and were now exempted from service. The clergy, he said, in their zeal to plunge the country into war had departed from every principle of the Christian religion. He was so disgusted that he discontinued attending church and had his wife read him the Episcopal service and a sermon every Sunday instead.³⁹

When the enemy landed at Port Royal and the coastal

³⁷ Journal, II, February 24, 1863.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, July 21, 1861.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, September 18, October 13, November 3, 1861, May 10, 1863.

Secessionists, "after their great gasconade," as O'Neill remarked, ignominiously fled, Perry had utter contempt for them. He especially condemned the "criminal supineness" of the citizens of Charleston, who with a well-trained militia of four thousand did not "fly to Port Royal & fight to their death in defence of their secession!" Charleston, endangered as it was, had to resort to a draft to raise troops for its protection. "This is the most shameful & disgraceful affair of the whole war. Charleston initiated this Revolution & now refuse voluntarily to defend the city! Shame! Shame!" wrote Perry.⁴⁰ Then came the general conscription, for which Perry served as clerk in Greenville. Amazed to find so many ready with excuses, he wrote in his Journal:

There is a great want of patriotism in the country. And especially amongst the leading Secessionists. They ought all to go into the war, but are all at home.

Rhett, Colcock, Magrath, Hayne, Gist, Pickens, Chesnut, Orr, Miles, Mazycke, Barnwell, Boyce, Whitner, and hundreds of others who inaugurated this Revolution are all at home or in some civil office & not in the army where they ought to be.⁴¹

When, in July, the conscripts from Greenville left in the cars for Columbia, Perry wrote:

It was distressing to see the poor fellows taking leave of their mothers & wives & children. They cried heartily & seemed greatly distressed. These poor men from the mountains had nothing to do in bringing on this Revolution. They opposed it with all their ignorant strength. And now they are called forth to go & fight, be killed, or die of disease in camp whilst those who urged on the contest and have property & fortunes are safe at home enjoying all the ease & luxuries of life! When I see a poor Union man that is leaving his wife & children at home to suffer forced away to fight & die, whilst his rich disunionist neighbor is left at home because he is a Preacher, or a doctor or holds some employment under the Confederacy which exempts him from the conscription—my

⁴⁰ John B. O'Neill to Perry, November 14, 30, 1861, Perry Papers; Journal, II, November 10, 1861, February 23, 1862.

⁴¹ II, March 2, 1862.

heart cries out injustice, shame & infamy. I have no respect for any able bodied man who was a Secessionist & is now at home safe & secure from the dangers of battle & the dangers, hardships & diseases of the camp! There are such men here now in this Village who even refuse to give money to supply the wants of the soldiers! Infamous in all time to come be their name & remembrance!⁴²

When the fortunes of the Confederacy were on the fatal decline in 1863, Perry gave vent to his bitterness of soul in his Journal:

I have nothing to do & am distressed with the prospects of my dear country. In order to kill time, which drags heavily with me I will write in my Journal—unbossom myself & my feelings.

For thirty years I labored hard to save my country from the horrible doom which now hangs over her. She is already ruined! In mourning for her gallant sons killed in battle—dessolated by a cruel enemy! on the eve of want & starvation! Widows and orphans are destitute & weeping for their husbands & fathers. All this ruin & misery has been entailed on us by the silly politicians, fanatical clergy & wicked newspaper Editors. They have plunged our country into this horrid [?] & horrible war & yet the rascals are not in it, but exempted by law from going to War!

This war was said to be waged for slavery & free trade! It may be the death for rule of slavery as it certainly has been of free trade. Never will the country again be free from a high tariff. It is necessary & will be to raise money to pay our national debt in all time to come. Slavery has been weakened & has already lost hundreds of millions. This we have gained!! But this is not all—an endless war!—hunger & destitution!!—The mean & selfish are making fortunes out of the misery & ruin of their fellow creatures!

They who urged on this war have not gone into it! They are at home! The rich are at home! Whilst the poor are driven from their starving families to fight & be killed. It is so all over the State! My blood boils & my heart runs over with gall & bitterness when I think of it! We were a happy and prosperous people & might have continued so but for the politicians, editors & preachers North & South—They stirred up this Revolution & destruction! And now they are safe at home—filling some civil office or shirking from the service of their country.

⁴² *Ibid.*, July 20, 1862.

Yankees never acted more meanly than have Southern men in taking advantage of the necessities of their fellow creatures to make fortunes for themselves. They who opposed the Revolution have done more for the war than they who advocated it—Yancey was the arch fiend in breaking up the peace & happiness of the Union, & yet he has never thought of going into battle. The other leaders have done the same—Barnwell Rhett—But I cant go on as I intended—I feel too bitter.⁴³

IV

But for the gallant army of the Confederacy, struggling against overwhelming odds, Perry had supreme admiration. He lived from day to day to hear the news of battle, since his son was in the thick of it from the beginning to the end of the war. After the Brooks Cavalry had joined Wade Hampton's Legion at Richmond, Perry wrote in his Journal:

I am very anxious about my son. It would be a terrible blow to us if he should be lost in battle. Two of my promising & lovely children have already departed this life! Their deaths were an unutterable affliction. I do not think it is possible for evermore to be happy in this life.⁴⁴

Soon came the news of the great Battle of Manassas with its heavy casualties. Though he knew that Hampton's Cavalry had not arrived in time for the engagement, Perry was restless to go on to Virginia. "To stay here is painful. I can not read—I can not do business—My mind is so much disturbed," he wrote.⁴⁵

On August 20 he set out for Manassas, stopping in Richmond for a day to visit the Confederate Congress. There he talked with Rhett, Barnwell, and Memminger. Proceeding on the train with crowds of soldiers to Manassas, he arrived just before night, only to find that no one could tell him the whereabouts of the Hampton Legion. Unable to obtain lodging or food, he was invited by several officers to share their shanty and supper. Next day, after securing a horse and rid-

⁴³ *Ibid.*, May 12, 1863.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, July 7, 1861.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, July 25, 1861.

ing many hours in the hot sun in fruitless search, he was finally directed to the Legion. He was rejoiced to find Willie in good health and spirits, and the army well cared for. He remained several days, riding over the battlefield with Willie and visiting friends in other regiments. Especially glad was he to see the Butler Guards from Greenville. The Army of Northern Virginia, encamped for thirty or forty miles along the countryside, he regarded "the finest looking troops the world ever saw." The trip was very fatiguing, but gave him much satisfaction. On his return to Greenville his office was filled for days with people inquiring about the army and the welfare of their friends.⁴⁶

Willie, a true son of his father in personal courage, performed heroic feats in the cavalry engagements around Richmond. He was elected lieutenant in the spring of 1862, and cited for bravery by Colonel M. C. Butler. Perry was proud of his son's record, but despaired of his surviving the war. When he heard several times of his being ill or wounded, he could hardly bear the suspense. Relief followed when Willie was allowed a furlough to recuperate or to recruit for his company.⁴⁷ But as the fall of Vicksburg seemed imminent in the spring of 1863, Perry became despondent. "I have heard from Willie—He is well," he wrote. "But I do not expect him to live through the War! What is there now to live for—We are a ruined people let the result be as it may! I always knew it & predicted it."⁴⁸

But Perry's foreboding was not realized. After an arduous campaign with the Second South Carolina Cavalry on the Rapidan and Rappahannock in 1863, Willie's regiment was sent to a camp near Wilmington in 1864, and on to James Island, South Carolina, where in the summer he suffered an

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, September 7, 1861.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, September 18, 1861—September 4, 1863, *passim*; W. H. Perry to Perry, September 13, 1861—January 8, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); Col. M. C. Butler to "General," January 6, 1863, *ibid.*; Thos. J. Semmes to Perry, August 29, 1862, *ibid.*; Edward F. Stokes to *idem*, August 25, 29, 1864, *ibid.*; A. P. Hayne to *idem*, May 8, 1862, *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Journal, II, May 30, 1863.

attack of "remittent fever" and was given a furlough home. January, 1865, found him back near Fort Fisher, writing to Perry: "As to the appointment of Aid to Governor Magrath I believe I would rather not have it offered to me, for I should not like to refuse a good position nor would I like to accept a place to keep out of service in the field." He returned safely after the war and resumed law practice with his father.⁴⁹

V

For four years life at Greenville revolved about the war. The chief interest of the people was hearing the news of battle. Since there was no telegraph or daily newspaper in the town, crowds gathered at the railway station in the afternoon to await the train from Columbia. Newspapers from the capital often gave them first information of the death or wounding of loved ones at the front. In the latter part of the war, Dr. E. T. Buist, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, stood on the platform and read the casualty list in a loud, clear voice. On the same platform were placed the pine coffins of the Confederate dead, waiting to be claimed.⁵⁰

Perry's interests were centered in the war. "I can do nothing now but read the newspapers & talk of the war," he wrote. Every day or two Waddy Thompson, C. J. Elford, or General Easley came to his office to talk over the war situation. In 1862 Perry developed an intimate friendship with Senator Thomas J. Semmes, of Louisiana, who was spending the summer in Greenville and called each morning to chat for an hour or so. Often in the afternoon they rode to the station together for the newspapers and then sat on Perry's porch to read them and smoke. Sometimes Thompson joined them. Several times Robert Barnwell came to Greenville to visit his sister, Mrs. Fuller, and Perry enjoyed talking over the affairs of the Confederacy with him. "Mr. Barnwell has long been my model of a gentleman, a patriot, & Statesman," he wrote.⁵¹

⁴⁹ May 21, 1863—January 8, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

⁵⁰ Autobiography, 1874, p. 116; Journal, II, August 15, November 3, 1861; C. A. David, "Greenville of Old," No. 1, David Scrap Book.

⁵¹ Journal, II, August 4, 1861, August 2, 12, 1862, June 3, 1863.

As the Federal forces extended their occupation of the sea islands and threatened the capture of Charleston and Savannah in the fall of 1861, many women, children, and older men fled to the up country. Scarcity of provisions in Charleston added to the stream of refugees. By the spring of 1862 "great crowds" from the low country had come to live in Greenville, and many bought homes and made investments there. Prices then soared to fabulous heights.⁵²

Perry had purchased a mountain farm thirty-three miles from Greenville and had started building a summer home, "Glencoe," just before the outbreak of the war. He stole away with one of his sons for a few days at a time to supervise laying out a road, building fences, and clearing land. Then, when the house was completed, the family went up at intervals to spend a week or so in the quiet retreat. There, in the comforting presence of his wife and children, Perry found respite from the perplexing problems that disturbed him. Mrs. Perry was always gentle and understanding. As secretary and treasurer of the "Ladies' Hampton Legion Association," she supported the war as loyally as did her husband. Of Perry's feelings she wrote many years later: "He would willingly have died to save South Carolina from Secession & the ruin & degradation he knew would be the consequences of disunion." Perry longed to spend weeks and months on the peaceful farm, but had to hasten back to his many duties in Greenville. He often left Mrs. Perry and the children there for the season.⁵³

Though there was little business in the courts during the war, Perry made a very good income from professional services and Confederate offices. As commissioner of impressment, he received eight dollars per day with ten cents per mile for traveling. In March, 1863, he wrote that he was making

⁵² *Ibid.*, December 3, 1861, February 16, March 2, April 19, May 10, 1862, May 30, 1863; A. P. Hayne to Perry, May 1, 4, 8, 9, 1862, Perry Papers.

⁵³ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 10, 17, 1861; Journal, II, March 10, August 4, 15, October 13, December 3, 1861, January 19, July 20, September 14, October 26, December 25, 1862, January 4, 19, February 24, April 17, 1863; Perry to A. Burt, August 2, 1863, Perry Papers; Mrs. B. F. Perry, Extracts from Perry Journal, I, 6, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

five or ten dollars every day from his profession and had invested \$4,000 in notes and land during the preceding three or four months. He had sent \$2,000 to Charleston in South Carolina bills and sold it for \$2,700 in Confederate bills. But two months later he wrote: "The prices of provisions are fabulous! Hard to live! Money is plenty! I am making a good deal by my Profession—But money will buy nothing!" He showed his practical business turn by planting Glencoe in corn and hauling the produce all the way to Greenville.⁵⁴

Shortly before the fall of Vicksburg in 1863 Perry wrote in his Journal:

My heart is so full of my country's distress & ruin that I can not enjoy life. I cannot read & study as I once did. I cannot attend to business as in former days. My mind is constantly occupied with the painful news of battles, in which thousands and tens of thousands are slain! No results obtained! Our poor soldiers half fed & their families at home in dread of starvation! Taxes enormous to pay the Confederate Government. The necessities of life at fabulous prices! Provisions can not be purchased even at those prices! The land is filled with extortioners & unprincipled speculators!⁵⁵

On September 4, 1863, Perry made the last entry in his Journal. The defeat at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July had sealed the doom of the Confederacy. He foresaw the breakdown of Southern resistance, and thus scored the offenders:

There is no mistaking the signs of the times—Both sections are tired of this bloody war! The question is which will hold out longest! Judging from the character of the two people my apprehension is the Yankees will show the most perseverance. . . . The North has three men to our one! If they over run the country the danger is in the South giving up. It is impossible to conquer & hold in subjection a people scattered over such an extent of Territory if the people persevere. But my belief is that state after state will fall back into the Union rather than continue the War! What then God only knows! It may result in the emancipation of our slaves

⁵⁴ Journal, II, March 19, May 10, 30, 1863.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, May 17, 1863.

and the dishonor of the South as a people. . . . But in any event, whether subjugated or Independent, whether restored to the Union as we were before the war, or held as conquered Provinces we are a ruined people!

Instead of that self sacrificing spirit which should actuate our people & make them give up all for their country, they are devoting themselves to speculation money making & extortion, to an entire forgetfulness of the great cause in which our country is involved! Shameful & criminal! They who were loudest for secession & revolution are now at home making fortunes! skulking the army & seeking exemptions!

This war has borne particularly hard on the Poor! They have had to leave their wives & children without food & go to fight! whilst the rich are at home speculating & refusing to sell provisions to their famishing families! Oh Shame! Shame! on the farmers & planters who are now asking four or five dollars per bushel for corn & seven & eight dollars for wheat per bushel! Such a people do not deserve success! God will punish them in some way & I fear it is by the emancipation of their slaves!

The Confederate money is fast depreciating & these high prices are rapidly increasing that depreciation—Never did a people play so palpably into the hands of their Enemy!⁵⁶

Perry told his wife that his heart was broken and he could write no more.⁵⁷ To his Unionist friend, James O'Hanlon, he wrote a few months later: "Our Country is in a black cloud and there is no knowing when it will burst upon us." O'Hanlon replied:

A starving soldiery and a Bankrupt Government! . . . The future, O! the future—not one gleam of hope, so long as this cruel war continues. . . .

I am sure, there are thousands in the State who *now* would get up at *midnight* to vote us back into the old Union—and many too, who were *rank Secessionists*.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, September 4, 1863.

⁵⁷ Mrs. B. F. Perry, Extracts from Perry Journal, I, 6, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

⁵⁸ December 15, 1863, Perry Papers.

CHAPTER TWENTY

A Provisional Governor Is Appointed

RUIN MORE dreadful than Perry had prophesied descended upon the state in the last months of the war. Sidney Andrews, Radical correspondent of the Boston *Advertiser* and Chicago *Tribune*, visiting it soon afterwards, wrote: "The war was a long time in reaching South Carolina, but there was vengeance in its very breath when it did come,—wrath that blasted everything it touched, and set Destruction on high as the genius of the State." Sherman's army had cut "a broad black streak of ruin and desolation" through the heart of the state. In a path forty miles wide from Savannah to the North Carolina line, railroads, bridges, crops were destroyed, live-stock driven off, homes pillaged and burned, food seized from starving families. Columbia was laid in ashes, only a thin fringe of houses remaining around a charred mass of blackened chimneys and crumbling walls. Until provisions could be brought from beyond the desolated area, those which had escaped the fire and pillage were donated for common distribution. Joseph LeConte, professor of geology at South Carolina College, ran a flatboat down the river to bring corn to the destitute city.¹

William Gilmore Simms, a refugee in Columbia, wrote Perry two weeks after the fire:

¹ Sidney Andrews, *The South since the War: As Shown by Fourteen Weeks of Travel and Observation in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Boston, 1866), pp. 28-36; A. Toomer Porter, *Led On! Step by Step: Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South 1828-1898, An Autobiography* (New York and London, 1898), pp. 152-175; William D. Armes (ed.), *The Autobiography of Joseph Le Conte* (New York, 1903), pp. 229-231; *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (New York, 1908), III, 167-168.

We have only an occasional voice from the outer world, and there is not a shop left in Columbia. . . . The incendiary & Robber have done their work most effectually with the wretched people of this town. No less than 8000 persons are depending for their daily food, upon a short ration of meal & lean beef, distributed by the authorities. Half of the population, male & female have been robbed of all the clothes they had, save those they wore, and of these many have had overcoat, hat & shoes taken from them. Watches & purses were appropriated at every corner: and the amount of treasure & wealth, in cloth, gold, silver & other booty borne away by the Huns & Vandals of the Century is incomputable. Seven-eighths of the best portions of Columbia have been destroyed. . . . All is wreck, confusion & despair.²

The surrender of Lee and Johnston in April found South Carolina utterly prostrate. Distress was accentuated by disruption of communication. Henry W. Ravenel, a prominent planter and botanist of Aiken, did not hear of Lee's surrender until two weeks afterwards. Though he occasionally received an Augusta *Constitutionalist*, he was not able to obtain a South Carolina newspaper for months—indeed, only a few continued to be published.³ C. G. Memminger, living in the mountains at Flat Rock, just across the North Carolina line, welcomed newspapers several weeks old which Perry sent by friends passing through Greenville. "We have neither mails nor correspondence, so that any glimpse of the doings of the great world is highly acceptable," he wrote.⁴ The Greenville Railroad ran only as far south as Alston. Passengers might travel in broken-down carriages or rough wagons from there to Columbia, but there were no arrangements for transportation of mail.⁵

Poverty was universal. The wealthy planter was reduced to the same dire extremity as the poor small farmer, for the Confederate securities in which he had loyally invested were

² March 6, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

³ Henry W. Ravenel, Private Journal, 1859-1883 (MSS, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina), May 1, 2, 6, 13, July 28, August 22, 1865.

⁴ C. G. Memminger to Perry, August 4, 1865, Perry Papers.

⁵ Columbia *Daily Phoenix*, July 31, August 1, 11, 1865.

now worthless, his slaves emancipated without compensation, and his land devastated. Men who had owned hundreds of slaves and thousands of acres of land were penniless. Henry Ravenel wrote on May 8 that his available fortune was eighty-five cents made from the sale of vegetables. Richard Yeadon, a refugee in Kalmia, although he had piles of Confederate money and securities, had to borrow from friends to live and pay taxes. A. Toomer Porter, rector of the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston, had lost all his money in Confederate bonds, and accepted a loan of \$100 from a Negro butcher.⁶

The planter's most serious handicap was the demoralization of labor produced by the sudden emancipation of slaves. Ignorant, credulous, and bewildered, the Negroes thought that emancipation meant lifelong freedom from work. They believed widely circulated tales that the plantations would be divided among them at Christmas and each would receive "forty acres and a mule." Many quit the farm to stream into town, where food was being distributed by the Freedmen's Bureau, an organization established by Congress in March to look after the interests of the emancipated blacks. Others stayed on the plantations only to spend their time in idleness and plunder. Some, however, remained peacefully with their former masters, continuing the loyal devotion they had shown throughout the war.⁷

The Bureau assumed management of the abandoned plantations on the sea islands, which, since their capture in 1861, had been worked by Negroes under supervision of the Federal Army. It also seized abandoned homes in towns, renting them to Negroes and confiscating public buildings for Negro schools. When the Reverend Mr. Porter returned to his home

⁶ Walter Lynwood Fleming, *The Sequel to Appomattox: A Chronicle of the Reunion of the States* (New Haven, 1921), pp. 2-3, 13; Andrews, *The South since the War*, pp. 34, 36; Henry Ravenel Journal, May 2, 3, 8, 22, 1865; Richard Yeadon to Perry, August [n.d.], 1865, Perry Papers; Porter, *Led On! Step By Step*, pp. 196-198.

⁷ Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, pp. 38-42; Henry Ravenel Journal, May 12, 16, 1865; *Columbia Phoenix*, June 6, 1865.

in Charleston in early June, he was challenged at the gate by a burly black Negro dressed in United States uniform, who said that the house belonged to the Freedmen's Bureau. Assuming a tone of authority, Porter gained admission, only to find the twelve rooms stripped of all furniture. The homes of Richard Yeadon and other prominent Charlestonians were appropriated for months. Governor Magrath's residence was used as a home for Northern teachers of Negro schools, and C. G. Memminger's as an asylum for Negro children.⁸ Porter wrote to his boyhood friend in New York:

What is the design and temper of the Northern people. . . . Is it the utter destruction of this people and country? Do they wish to push us out of the land or to drive us to desperation? . . . We will not speak of the past or its issues. God has permitted the cause to go against us. While it must be admitted we struggled hard, fought well, endured privations which never can be known, yet we are, as a people, willing to accept. . . . I have traveled this State over, every part of it, in the last three months, and unless our total subjugation and ruin is the policy, if there is any purpose of recognizing us as free white men I think I have declared the temper of us all. . . . I wish you would come on here for auld lang syne sake, just to see the state of things. Your heart would bleed for us. Negroes garrison everywhere, and the swagger and insolence of temporary and unaccustomed power is borne. . . . You have read history; you know human nature. I dread under present aspects the hour when the heart can stand no more, and the pent-up feelings result in a hopeless but a fearful holocaust of blood. . . . We are now subjected to all the petty tyranny of small men who come after success in battle and we are trying to be patient. We can bear these things for a while, if we can see hope beyond in the Government. You will excuse the frankness of this letter, but you know I love my people.⁹

⁸ Laura J. Webster, "The Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina," *Smith College Studies in History*, I (January, 1916), 67-96; Porter, *Led On! Step By Step*, pp. 192-195; R. Yeadon to Perry, November 23, 1865, Perry Papers; C. G. Memminger to *idem*, August 8, 1866, *ibid.*; New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 9, 20, 1865.

⁹ A. Toomer Porter to R. Lathers, June 9, 1865, in Alvan F. Sanborn (ed.), *Reminiscences of Richard Lathers: Sixty Years of a Busy Life in South Carolina, Massachusetts and New York* (New York, 1907), pp. 248-249.

On May 15 Major General Q. A. Gillmore, Federal commander of the Department of the South, with headquarters at Hilton Head, assumed military control of the state. He set aside the civil government, declared the Negroes free citizens, and ordered white employers to enter into written labor contracts with them. Governor Magrath was arrested and imprisoned at Fort Pulaski. The Federal armies of occupation were in general a great aid in restoring peace and quiet to the state. But when Negro troops were employed, they demoralized the freedmen in the vicinity and were deeply resented by the whites. Especially irritating were the Treasury agents, sent by the Federal Government to confiscate all property belonging to the Confederacy. Since they received a commission of about 25 per cent on its sale, many were utterly unscrupulous—seizing cotton, horses, mules, wagons, tobacco, rice, sugar, and other products upon which the Confederacy had not the shadow of a claim.¹⁰

II

Lincoln had pursued a policy of magnanimity toward the South and even contemplated a plan for remunerating slaveholders for the loss of their slaves. His assassination was considered a public calamity in South Carolina, for Johnson was known to hold stern views about punishing traitors. In Charleston and other places the citizens held public meetings and bemoaned Lincoln's death. The arrest and imprisonment of leading civil officials seemed to presage a reign of retaliation and terror. Magrath's seizure was followed by that of George A. Trenholm, ex-Secretary of the Confederate Treasury.¹¹ But Johnson, partly influenced by conservative members of his Cabinet, soon modified his views, and issued on May 29, 1865,

¹⁰ *Idem to idem*, June 18, 1865, *ibid.*, pp. 250-251; Henry Ravenel Journal, June 29, July 8, 22, 1865; *Columbia Phoenix*, May 26, June 15, 1865; *Camden Tri-Weekly Journal*, May 31, 1865; *Charleston Courier*, June 13, 1865; John S. Reynolds, *Reconstruction in South Carolina* (Columbia, 1905), pp. 3-6; Joseph Le Conte, *Autobiography*, p. 230.

¹¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 260; Richard Lathers, *Reminiscences*, p. 250; Henry Ravenel Journal, May 15, 1865; *Camden Tri-Weekly Journal*, June 7, 1865; *Charleston Courier*, June 15, 1865.

proclamations embodying the essential elements of Lincoln's plan of reconstruction. First, the Amnesty Proclamation offered pardon to all who had participated in the rebellion (except high civil and military officials of the Confederacy, governors of insurrectionary states, and those owning taxable property valued at more than \$20,000) if they would take an oath to support the Constitution and Union and abide by all laws and proclamations emancipating slaves. Excepted classes might apply to the President for special pardon. Second, a proclamation appointing William W. Holden Provisional Governor of North Carolina outlined the presidential policy in regard to readmission of states, stating that civil rule was to be re-established when a constitutional convention elected by "loyal" citizens (all of whom should have been eligible to vote in the state in 1860) should adopt a republican constitution abolishing slavery and restore the state to its allegiance to the Union. In June similar proclamations appointed provisional governors in Mississippi, Georgia, Texas, and Alabama.¹²

Early in May the citizens of Charleston and its precincts had inaugurated a movement for the restoration of civil government in South Carolina. A committee composed of James Lynah, Dr. John F. Poppenheim, William H. Houston, Samuel Hart, John Van Winkle, and John Ferguson solicited from the United States military commander in Charleston the use of Hibernian Hall for a public meeting on May 11.

It is proposed, Sir, to initiate a movement that cannot but be acceptable to yourself as a soldier in the cause of the United States.

The aim of every citizen of South Carolina should now be directed towards the speedy restoration of Peace; obedience to the laws, both Federal and State; and a return to all the religious, industrial and social pursuits of life, so indispensable to the virtue and happiness of a civilized people.

The request was granted, and the *Courier* stressed the neces-

¹² James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897* (Washington, 1896-1899), VI, 310-325; Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, pp. 54-76; J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Boston, 1937), pp. 707-713.

sity of a full attendance to show the loyal sentiments of the state.¹³ There is no report of the meeting in the ensuing issue. According to Perry, Redpath, "a low Yankee officer," got a number of Negroes to attend and break it up. The committee, however, tried to secure co-operation from other districts and parishes in the state. Dr. Poppenheim sought Perry's aid in Greenville. On May 31 a Union meeting was held in Summerville to request restoration of civil government, and in June and early July public meetings followed in various other towns in the state. On June 14 the Columbia meeting appointed a Committee of Twenty-one to communicate with the President and correspond with their fellow-citizens in other districts to urge early action. The Charleston *Courier* constantly stressed the necessity of speedy restoration of civil government to reopen the marts of trade. "Charleston, as the most important commercial point in the State, should be one of the first to move in the matter," it declared.¹⁴

On June 16 a committee composed of Edward Frost, Joseph A. Yates, William Whaley, William J. Gaer, Isaac E. Holmes, and several others, selected by Charleston citizens without the formality of a public meeting, proceeded to Washington to lay the request for appointment of a Provisional Governor before the President. It had been rumored several weeks earlier that William Aiken would receive the appointment. He had been in conference with President Johnson, and had spoken of him in warmest terms upon his return to Charleston. Ex-Congressman William W. Boyce's name was also put forward by several journals and public meetings.¹⁵

The Charleston delegation had an interview with Johnson

¹³ May 10, 11, 1865.

¹⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 244; John F. Poppenheim, M.D., to Perry, June 3, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); Charleston *Courier*, June 1, 6, 7, 10, 14, 15, 20, 28, 1865; Columbia *Phoenix*, June 5, 13, 15, 20, 24, July 3, 4, 7, 1865; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, June 22, July 6, 1865; D. L. Wardlaw to Perry, June 22, 1865, Perry Papers; F. W. Pickens to *idem*, July 8, 1865, *ibid.* (Baker Coll.).

¹⁵ Charleston *Courier*, June 1, 7, 16, 1865; Columbia *Phoenix*, June 13, 24, July 6, 1865; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, June 24, 1865; New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 2, 6, 1865; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 242-244.

on June 24, when Judge Frost voiced the earnest desire of the state for restoration of civil government. The people were ready to take the oath of allegiance to the Federal Government, he said. Their delusions were dispelled; they would cooperate in making the new labor system effective. When Johnson asked the committee to submit a list of men for Provisional Governor, they named William Aiken, of Charleston; Samuel McAliley, of Chester; William W. Boyce, of Fairfield; John L. Manning, of Clarendon; and Perry—all capable men, said Frost, but all more or less involved in the late rebellion. Johnson at once seemed interested in Perry. "Is that Ben Perry?" he asked. "I know him well, but is he not too much of a people's man to be acceptable to the city of Charleston?"

"Not at all," replied Frost. "He has always been a good Union man and a gentleman of strict integrity. The people certainly would respect him, and he could not fail to be acceptable."¹⁶

On June 30 the New York *Tribune* announced that Perry and Boyce were the most prominent candidates for Provisional Governor of South Carolina and that the former would probably be appointed. The same day Johnson issued a proclamation appointing Perry, but communications were so disrupted that news did not reach South Carolina for over a week. The Columbia *Phoenix* on July 7 and 8 was still comparing qualifications of Boyce, Perry, and several other candidates. Though it was rumored in Columbia, Charleston, and various other places that Perry had been appointed, confirmation did not reach Charleston until July 7 and Columbia until July 9. F. W. Pickens had not heard the news in Edgefield on July 8, and it was not generally known until several days thereafter. The Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, having received the information through a telegram from Charlotte, announced the appointment on July 8, but the Columbia *Phoenix* first reported it on July 10.¹⁷

¹⁶ Columbia *Phoenix*, July 6, 1865; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 94, 244.

¹⁷ New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 30, 1865; Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, pp. 326-328; Columbia *Phoenix*, July 7, 8, 10, 1865;

III

Thus when Greenville held its public meeting on July 3 to request restoration of civil government, it knew nothing of Perry's appointment. Perry himself was utterly unaware of it, having neither sought nor desired the position.¹⁸ The statement by Simkins and Woody that on the occasion he "willingly accepted the opportunity of enlightening South Carolina concerning the wisdom of the Tennessee Unionist who had appointed him"¹⁹ is an unjustifiable intimation. Whatever criticism may be made of the sagacity or tact of some of his utterances, his motive was irreproachable. He was speaking in support of resolutions he had submitted signifying the desire of the people of Greenville to return to the Union and requesting the appointment of a Provisional Governor. He was addressing a people who were proud as well as prostrate, and a people distrustful of Johnson.

First, he spoke of the sorrow and devastation that had befallen the Southern states as a result of the war and of their humiliating position in having to petition the conquerors to restore their lost rights. But he reminded them that it was the bitter fruit of secession and rebuked the Secessionists for their "madness and folly" in inaugurating the "bloody and disastrous revolution." What a fatal mistake to have thought that the Southern states could preserve slavery by leaving the Union! And why had they failed in their rebellion? It was true that the contest was a most unequal one.

But, sir, one great cause of our failure was, that the Heart of the Southern people never was in this revolution! There was not a State, except South Carolina, in which there was a majority in favor of secession! . . .

Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, July 8, 1865; W. D. Porter to Perry, July 7, 1865, Perry Papers; Josephine Le Conte to *idem*, July 9, 1865, *ibid.*; Sanford W. Barker to *idem*, July 10, 1865, *ibid.*; F. W. Pickens to *idem*, July 8, 1865, *ibid.* (Baker Coll.).

¹⁸ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 245; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, August 10, 1865; Columbia *Phoenix*, July 22, 1865.

¹⁹ Francis B. Simkins and Robert H. Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, 1932), p. 35.

. . . The people were themselves to blame for its failure. They were unwilling to make those sacrifices which were essential to its success. Many who were most prominent in the movement, never did anything for it after the war commenced. . . . In fact, towards the latter part of the war, it seemed that everyone was trying to keep out of the army, and was willing to pay anything, and make any sacrifice to do so. When General Johnston surrendered his army, he had on his muster roll seventy thousand men, but only fourteen thousand to be carried into battle! General Lee's army was in the same condition. Where were the absentees? At home, on furlough, staying over their furloughs, deserted and straggling. At no time during the last three years of the war, was there more than one-third of the army ready to march into battle! How was it possible for the Southern people to succeed, acting thus?

Congress, too, Mr. Chairman, is greatly to blame for their exemptions. All between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, should have been forced into the army and kept there. . . .

He urged them to adopt his resolutions expressing their willingness to accept the terms of the President's proclamation and return to their allegiance to the United States.

. . . I will here frankly say . . . that there was not a man in the United States who more deeply regretted the secession of the Southern States than I did at the beginning of the revolution. There is not now in the Southern States any one who feels more bitterly the humiliation and degradation of going back into the Union than I do. Still, I know that I shall be more prosperous and happy in the Union than out of it.

He tried to dispel their distrust of Johnson by showing that he was more acceptable to the South than Lincoln, since he was a Southerner, a Democrat, and a slaveholder. "President Johnson is a man of iron will and nerve, like Andrew Jackson," he said, "and will adhere to his principles and political faith . . . the South should have every hope and confidence in him." In ten years they would be happy and prosperous again.

As for the fear that Southern officers would be treated as traitors, he argued:

The secession of the Southern States was far greater and very different from a rebellion proper. It was organized by constitutional sovereign States, acting in their sovereign capacity, and not by unauthorized assemblages of citizens. . . .

. . . It was legitimate war between the two sections, and they acted towards each other throughout the war as recognized belligerents, and were so treated and recognized by foreign nations. Prisoners were exchanged between the two belligerents, and none were treated as traitors during the whole of the four years' war. . . . Surely a general officer who has been exchanged while this gigantic war was waging, cannot now be demanded as a traitor, tried and executed as a traitor. . . .

He ended with the appeal:

I cannot, and would not, Mr. Chairman, ask my fellow citizens to forget the past, in this war, so far as the North is concerned. There have been deeds of atrocity committed by the United States armies, which never can be forgotten in the Southern States. But I do entreat them to become loyal citizens and respect the national authorities of the Republic. Abandon at once and forever all notions of Secession, Nullification and Disunion, determined to live, and to teach your children to live, as true American citizens. . . . As soon as the ferment of the revolution subsides, we shall be restored to all our civil rights, and be as free and republican as we ever were. . . .²⁰

Though Perry had apprehended that the speech would displease many in South Carolina, it was well received. Even Samuel McGowan, late General in the Confederate Army, wrote that he was delighted with it, that it stated "undoubted facts in a manly & independent way."²¹ The *Columbia Phoenix*—under the editorship of William Gilmore Simms²²—commented:

The speech of Gov. Perry, made prior to his appointment, which we publish in this day's paper, will be read with interest and satis-

²⁰ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 229-241; *Columbia Phoenix*, July 22, 1865.

²¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 256-257; S. McGowan to Perry, August 4, 1865, Perry Papers.

²² Postscript by Simms, J. L. Boatwright to Perry, July 28 [1865], Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); correspondent, *New York Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 9, 1865.

faction by all classes of our people. It is a simple, clear, manly and well considered performance, and its utterance was particularly well-timed and appropriate. It is manly and sensible, in many respects forcible and impressive—in all, it indicates a just, calm, discriminating mind, free from all rash opinion, free from passion and indiscretion, void of all subtlety, all demagogueism, and calculated, we think, to relieve the public mind of much of its foreboding and apprehension. As a matter of course, it can indicate no particular policy in his future government of the State, for the simple reason that, at the time of its utterance, Mr. Perry was as little conscious of the honor that awaited him as was any of the public. And, besides, we take for granted that the policy of his government is measurably to be shaped and indicated by the powers that be at Washington, whither he has gone for instructions. But something of this policy, so far as it is confided to his discretion, may be gathered from the general tone of the speech, from its happy moderation of sentiment, and the just judgment which marks the performance throughout. We have every confidence that Gov. Perry will prove himself a judicious, thoughtful and indulgent ruler; moderate of exaction, temperate in the exercise of power, considerate of society and of all of the best interests of the State. He has long been known as one solicitous of reform in educational and legal respects, and he will no doubt seek to inaugurate certain measures of which he has been consistently an advocate in the Legislature for more than twenty years. . . .

. . . It will need all his firmness, all his vigor of mind, all the philosophy, the fruit of equal study, thought and experience, all the sympathy and support of friends and people, and all the favor of God, to enable Gov. Perry, or any Governor, to bring the shattered vessel safely into a safe harbor, and steady at a solid anchorage. We entreat of our readers, accordingly, to give him a hearty assurance, at the beginning of his labors, of their full co-operation. Let us all work together to the common end. The ship is ours, and we sink or swim together.²³

But, to Perry's surprise, the speech was severely condemned by the Northern press.²⁴ The Radical New York *Tribune*, seeking by any artifice to convince the North that the South

²³ July 22, 1865.

²⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 256.

was still disloyal and therefore unready for readmission to the Union, stated:

The President selected him [Perry] for Governor because he seemed to have a fairer record than any other prominent South Carolinian. When almost every other White had run mad on Secession, he kept silence; and it was understood that he would have been a Unionist if he had dared. . . .

Quoting the first paragraph of Perry's address, it continued:

We cannot believe that this is the spirit in which President Johnson expects his Provisional Governors to address the people whom he has chosen to prepare them for early restoration to their former *status* in the Union. And, if there be in South Carolina no better timber than this wherefrom to fashion a Provisional Governor, we think the manufacture might have wisely been postponed.

On Perry's expression that he felt "the humiliation and degradation of going back into the Union," the *Tribune* commented: "All which may be true, so far as Mr. Perry's feelings are concerned; but, if so, he is very unfit for a Union Governor." Quoting Perry's contention that the secession of the Southern states was "far greater and very different from a rebellion proper," since it was organized by "constitutional sovereign States," the *Tribune* retorted: "All which is not the doctrine that President Johnson appoints Provisional Governors to inculcate." In its closing paragraphs the editorial reveals the true purpose of the Radicals—ultimate enfranchisement of the freed Negro and disfranchisement of the Southern whites:

From beginning to end of this harangue, there is no recognition of that large majority of the people of South Carolina who are *not* "humiliated" nor "mortified," nor "subjugated" by the result of our late struggle, but emancipated, elevated, and for the first time recognized as entitled to the rights of human beings. For these, the Governor has no word, no thought, but that they should be kindly treated by the Whites. That they are hereafter to be anything but hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Whites, he does not seem even to have ever imagined. That they form any portion of

the people of South Carolina, Gov. Perry has obviously never dreamed.

A careful reading of this Carolina Unionist's speech has convinced us that South Carolina will not be ripe for perfect "reconstruction" for several months yet. . . .²⁵

Simms perceived the scheme of the Radicals, and retorted hotly in the *Phoenix*:

The rabid portions of the Northern . . . press are . . . very anxious to keep the Southern States out of the Government, out of Congress, out of power and place, though not out of the Union. They seek to monopolize the power in Congress, that they may, without impediment, appropriate the spoils. . . . [They] aim at giving suffrage to the negro, assuming that they will possess the exclusive power of directing his vote. Such are the objects of the creatures who make outcry about the speech of Gov. Perry. What was the character of this speech? . . . It was a mild, temperate and sensible publication, which, while it aimed to re-establish public confidence in the Union, declared the proper individual sympathies of the speaker for the South and his own section . . . it was necessary, to secure a sympathetic hearing on the part of his audience. His own individual record as a Unionist, was, perhaps, the most unexceptionable of any man in Carolina. . . . That he should feel with his people—that he should suffer humiliation from seeing his State driven back by the scourge and sword into the Union, ruined, impoverished, with one-half of her noblest sons perishing in the field in vain—is not at all inconsistent with his Unionism. . . . He must be true to his people, even while he remains faithful to his Government. . . . How should we tolerate Governor Perry—we who were all secessionists—could he speak otherwise? . . .²⁶

IV

The Greenville public meeting had resolved to send a delegation to Washington to present its petition to the President, and had elected Perry, Orr, C. J. Elford, and three others for the mission. About a week later, as they were proceeding on

²⁵ July 21, 1865.

²⁶ August 14, 1865. Simms remained editor of the *Phoenix* until October 1, 1865 (Simms to Evert Duyckinck, October 1, 1865, Duyckinck Papers [New York Public Library]).

their way, they were overtaken at Ninety-Six by a messenger from the President bearing Perry's commission as Provisional Governor. On July 19 they were graciously received by Johnson. They presented their memorial, assuring him that the people of South Carolina were unanimous in their acquiescence in the results of the war and in their readiness to comply with the terms of his proclamation.

After "a most cordial and gratifying" interview of an hour or two, the others withdrew and left Perry alone to converse with the President. Perry then said: "Mr. President, I should like to know how you came to appoint me Provisional Governor." Johnson replied: "I lived only one hundred and twenty-five miles from you, and of course knew all about you."

In discussing plans for the state convention in South Carolina, Johnson advised that white population alone be made the basis of representation, and that the parishes be ignored in the election of delegates. This would have given the more populous up country control of the convention and abolished the unfair representation of the low country that Perry had attacked so bitterly for thirty years. But he displayed his political acumen by declining to force this reform upon the people of his state. "If I leave the parish system for the convention to abolish, it will give very little dissatisfaction," he replied. "But if I ignore it in calling a convention, it will produce a very unpleasant excitement." He would adopt the basis of representation of the South Carolina House—property and population in equal ratio—in calling the convention, for he thought both these elements should be represented in every republican government. When the President also suggested that the election of president, vice-president, and governor should be given to the people in South Carolina, Perry heartily concurred. Johnson closed the interview by urging him to use all diligence in having the state reconstructed and members of Congress elected to be present at the opening of the session.²⁷

²⁷ *Ibid.*, July 15, 31, 1865; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 245-247; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1883), pp. 32-41.

Perry returned to the hotel and wrote his proclamation, which he forwarded to all the newspapers of South Carolina for publication. In it he urged all loyal citizens to take the oath of allegiance in the Amnesty Proclamation of the President, and announced that former civil officials would be restored to office when they had taken the oath. He set the first Monday in September for election of delegates to the state convention, apportioning each election district as many as it had members in the House. All who had taken the Amnesty Oath and were not within the excepted classes were eligible to vote or become candidates for the convention (provided they were legal voters under the state constitution as it stood prior to secession). All within the excepted classes must obtain pardon from the President. The convention was to assemble in Columbia on September 13 for the purpose of amending the state constitution or making a new one more republican. The proclamation declared in force the constitution and laws of South Carolina prior to secession, and adjured the judges and chancellors to resume their duties. It called upon Federal military authorities to assist the civil in enforcing the laws and preserving order, and enjoined all good citizens to unite in bringing to justice disorderly persons, robbers, and vagrants. As to the freedmen, the proclamation ran:

It is also expected that all former owners of freed persons will be kind to them, and not turn off the children or aged to perish; and the freed men and women are earnestly enjoined to make contracts, just and fair, for remaining with their former owners.

The Governor announced that his headquarters would be in Greenville.²⁸

At his next interview with the President, Perry sat from seven until ten in the evening discussing plans for the conduct of affairs in South Carolina. He felt very keenly the responsibility of the task that lay before him. He told Johnson of having issued the proclamation and explained why he had

²⁸ Columbia *Phoenix*, July 26, 1865, ff.; Camden *Weekly Journal*, August 4, 1865, ff.

restored to office all the civil officers of the state. In this tactful and conciliatory act Perry strengthened the confidence his fellow-citizens had always had in his integrity and disinterested patriotism. Any fear of proscriptive action against political opponents, such as had been undertaken so vindictively by Provisional Governor William G. Brownlow of Tennessee, was immediately dispelled. Perry was pursuing the same course as Governor Sharkey of Mississippi, another Unionist who strove only for the welfare of his state. But the policy was original with Perry—adopted because he had confidence in the ability and integrity of the old officers and knew they had been elected by the people. "I did not wish to enquire whether an officer had been a secessionist or Union man," he states in his *Reminiscences*, "nor had I any disposition to make my patronage a source of reward to personal friends. Many of those restored to offices had been my *bitterest* political enemies." As he remarked to Johnson, however, it would have been impossible to fill the offices with Union men in South Carolina, since the people had all taken sides with the state after it seceded.

Perry was very much impressed with the President's "patriotism, firmness, ability and magnanimity," and particularly with "his kindness and generosity towards the South"—which he had not been led to expect. "He is a fine looking gentleman, simple, and yet dignified in his manners," he writes.

The Greenville delegation also called on most of the Cabinet members while in Washington. They were pleased with the "cordial, frank manners, and fine, manly and noble appearance" of Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury. "He was a stout, tall gentleman, with a large head, good face and honest expression of countenance," remarks Perry. "He was a gentleman of great ability and practical mind." When McCulloch presented him with a bundle of applications for appointments in his department in South Carolina, Perry was greatly amused to find that the applicants all professed to have been strong Union men during the war. "I had never before heard of them as Union men," he writes.

The committee found the Attorney General, James Speed, of Kentucky, writing at his desk in his shirt sleeves. He received them kindly, but soon alluded to Perry's speech at Greenville and said he regretted that such a speech had been made by the Provisional Governor—that it showed South Carolina was not disposed to be loyal again. Perry replied that he had certainly not read the speech attentively, or he could not have come to any such conclusion. Speed admitted that he had read only the headings and comments of the *Tribune* and promised to read the text. Perry was not favorably impressed with him. "There was nothing in his appearance that would indicate that he was a man of more than ordinary capacity, nor was there anything in his conversation which was calculated to produce a different conclusion," he observes.

Perry's ruffled feelings were soothed when the group called on William H. Seward, Secretary of State. Perry mentioned his conversation with Speed, and Seward remarked that he had read the speech carefully and, considering the standpoint from which it was delivered, regarded it "a very good speech and unobjectionable." Though Seward was looking wretched from facial wounds inflicted by the assassin and grief over recent loss of his wife, he was very cordial and pleasant and told several amusing stories. He expressed himself very much gratified with Perry's account of the state of feeling in South Carolina. "Beyond all question Mr. Seward was a man of great ability and a profound statesman," writes Perry.

The South Carolinians were received coldly by Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War. Perry had expected him to be as interested as Seward in hearing good news from the Palmetto State, but he seemed utterly indifferent, interrupting Perry several times with irrelevant questions. The delegation soon took its departure.²⁹

At Johnson's suggestion Perry published an article explain-

²⁹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 158-160, 248-256; Robert Selph Henry, *The Story of Reconstruction* (New York, 1938), pp. 52-56; James W. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction in Tennessee 1860-1869* (Chapel Hill, 1934), pp. 83-102.

ing the object of the Greenville public meeting and giving the resolutions adopted. The President stated that he knew it was a Union meeting to request restoration of civil government, but a different impression had gone abroad. Reporters from the Washington *Daily Chronicle* called to have Perry explain certain passages in the speech.³⁰ The Washington correspondent of the New York *Herald* reported on July 21:

The publication of Governor Perry's speech, of July 3, has excited a storm of indignant opposition on the part of the more radical of the supporters of the Administration. The Governor has, however, had very satisfactory interviews with the President and most of the members of the Cabinet. They express great confidence in the loyalty and patriotism of Governor Perry, and believe that he will administer the duties of his office with a loyal spirit, and with the single desire to restore as speedily as possible the blessings of assured peace and constitutional loyal government to the people of that State. The explanations which Governor Perry has given of that speech, and the circumstances under which it was delivered, have largely obviated the unfavorable impression which some passages in it are unquestionably calculated to convey.

A few days later Perry returned to South Carolina to hasten the process of restoration.³¹

V

Meanwhile, news of his appointment had been received with universal approbation by the people of the state. The *Phoenix* pronounced it "as good a one as could be made," and assumed from "his known habits of business and energetic industry" that he would speedily reorganize the state.³²

When news reached Charleston, the *Courier* rejoiced that the President had selected "a native of the State, whose private life is pure and unstained, and whose public career has been marked by devotion to the Union." The Winnsboro *Tri-*

³⁰ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 256; R. D. Messer to Perry, July 20, 1865, Perry Papers.

³¹ Quoted in Columbia *Phoenix*, July 31, 1865; New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, July 28, 1865.

³² July 8, 10, 14, 1865.

Weekly News commented: "In conversing generally, with our citizens, they all seem to be satisfied with the appointment. Mr. Perry is a practical man, and a statesman, and is well qualified to preside over our State in her present distracted condition."³³

His old Unionist friends—few of whom survived—could best appreciate his appointment. Alfred Huger, at eighty-five still alert to his people's welfare, wrote to Perry: "I congratulate South Carolina, our Common Mother, upon your own appointment." C. W. Dudley, of Bennettsville, staunch Unionist colleague of Perry for thirty years in the legislature, wrote rejoicingly that it was "'manifest destiny' that the honest true politician should come to the top at last." Richard Yeadon, battle companion of nullification days, wrote: "It really seems to be providential that your old Unionism & your noble devotion to the fortunes of what you believed your *erring* State, should have united to render you the man for the crisis, acceptable alike to the U. S. authorities & our own people."³⁴

Letters of congratulation poured in from prominent men in all sections of the state. W. D. Porter of Charleston wrote that the news received "the entire & hearty approbation of our citizens." Wade Hampton wrote from Columbia: "It was with the greatest satisfaction that I saw your appointment as Governor & I hail it as the only gleam of sunshine which has fallen on the State since this black cloud has spread over our horizon." Other citizens of the ruined capital bespoke their gratification. W. F. deSaussure commented: "A clear head, sound judgment, prudence and energy are all wanting [wanted] for the successful discharge of this most delicate and important trust, and I am persuaded you will fulfill the public expectation." Mrs. LeConte wrote: "I cannot begin to express

³³ Charleston *Courier*, quoted in Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, August 1, 1865; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, July 11, 1865.

³⁴ Alfred Huger to Perry, July 13, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); C. W. Dudley to *idem*, July 14, 1865, Perry Papers; Richard Yeadon to *idem*, [n.d.] 1865, *ibid*.

the relief and happiness that these tidings have inspired us with."³⁵

From Ninety-Six, Newberry, Orangeburg, Aiken, and even the low-country towns of Barnwell and Georgetown and the parish of St. John's, Berkeley, came assurances to Perry that he possessed the entire confidence of the people. Former political opponents united with friends to offer hearty congratulations. William M. Shannon, Secessionist editor of the *Camden Journal*, expressed his belief that Perry was the man "whose capacities and antecedents alike" qualified him best to lead the state to the satisfaction of all parties. A. P. Aldrich was confident that he would bring about speedy restoration of civil government.³⁶ At the end of July, W. W. Boyce wrote Secretary Seward: "... public affairs are progressing as favorably as could be expected. The appointment of Perry as Governor gives great satisfaction."³⁷

VI

On his return to South Carolina, Perry stopped at the home of Judge James B. Campbell in Columbia, expecting to meet General Gillmore there to confer about harmonizing military and civil jurisdiction in the state; but Gillmore telegraphed that he could not come. Columbia citizens called, however, to hear the news from Washington—among them, Wade Hampton, General John Preston, Alfred Huger, Professors Maximilian LaBorde and Joseph LeConte. Perry gave an account of his interviews with the President and assured them that Johnson's policy toward the South would be "kind, conciliatory and magnanimous." The Columbians were rather

³⁵ W. D. Porter to Perry, July 7, 1865, Perry Papers; Wade Hampton to *idem*, July 27, 1865, *ibid.*; W. F. deSaussure to *idem*, July 9, 1865, *ibid.*; Josephine Le Conte to *idem*, July 9, 1865, *ibid.*

³⁶ R. C. Griffin to Perry, July 12, 1865, Perry Papers; William Hood to *idem*, July 17, 1865, *ibid.*; Thomas W. Glover to *idem*, July 14, 1865, *ibid.*; Henry Ravenel Journal, July 10, 1865; Jane Pringle to Perry, July 12, 1865, Perry Papers; Sanford W. Barker to *idem*, July 10, 1865, *ibid.*; William M. Shannon to *idem*, July 27, 1865, *ibid.*; A. P. Aldrich to *idem*, July 30, 1865, *ibid.*

³⁷ July 29, 1865, in *Official Records*, Ser. II, Vol. VIII, pp. 713-714.

skeptical, however, since the opinion prevailed over the state that Johnson was a cold, vindictive tyrant.³⁸

Perry's proclamation calling upon Carolinians to take the Amnesty Oath and participate in the election of a convention had been favorably received. Leading citizens hastened to take the oath and, if in the excepted classes, to apply for pardon. On July 27 Wade Hampton published in the *Columbia Phoenix* a letter which was republished widely and had a happy effect. He urged his fellow-citizens not to emigrate, but to cling to their desolated state and aid in the work of restoration. He said:

A distinguished citizen of our State—an honest man and a true patriot—has been appointed Governor. He will soon call a convention of the people, which will be charged with the most vital interests of our State. Choose for this convention your best and truest men; not those who have skulked in the hour of danger—nor those who have worshipped Mammon, while their country was bleeding at every pore—nor the politician, who after urging war, dared not encounter its hardships—but those who laid their all upon the altar of their country. Select such men, and make them serve as your representatives. You will then be sure that your rights will not be wantonly sacrificed, nor your liberty bartered for a mess of pottage. My intention is to pursue the course I recommend to others. . . . I invoke my fellow citizens—especially those who have shared with me the perils and the glories of the last four years—to stand by our State manfully and truly. . . .³⁹

On August 1 Perry made an address in the courthouse of Greenville:

Fellow-Citizens: I have met you this morning, not to make a speech, but to talk over the incidents of my late visit to Washington. I started there, three weeks since, as your delegate, to ask for the appointment of a Provisional Governor, and the restoration of civil authority in South Carolina. On my way, I met a messenger

³⁸ James B. Campbell to Perry, July 7, 1865, Perry Papers; telegram, *idem* to *idem*, July 18, 1865, *ibid.*; telegram, Q. A. Gillmore to *idem*, July 27 [1865], *ibid.*; New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, July 28, 1865; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 259-260.

³⁹ *Columbia Phoenix*, July 27, 1865; *Camden Weekly Journal*, August 4, 1865.

from his Excellency President Johnson, bearing a commission appointing me Provisional Governor of the State. This was an honor which I had not anticipated, and never aspired to.

He gave a full account of his interviews with the President and Cabinet, expressing regret that he had not also been able to see General Howard, head of the Freedmen's Bureau. But the delegation had earnestly tried to impress the President and Cabinet with the impolicy of garrisoning South Carolina with colored troops. Of his report to Johnson about conditions in the state, he said:

I told him that the people of South Carolina accepted the terms of his Proclamation, and were disposed to return to their allegiance to the Union. That from having been the most rebellious State in the South, I was satisfied South Carolina would, henceforth, be one of the most loyal of the Southern States. That she would reform her Constitution and abolish slavery, give the election of Governor and Presidential electors to the people, and equalize the representation of the State. I gave it as my opinion that the disunion feeling of the South had originated in the parishes.

He assured his audience that he had found the President able, kind, and magnanimous—a true patriot and statesman, whose political views coincided with his own.

He was equally opposed to the centralization and consolidation of powers in Congress as he was to the secession of the States. It must be left to the Legislature of each State to decide who shall be allowed to vote in the State. Any attempt on the part of Congress to control the elective franchise of a State would be an unwarrantable usurpation.⁴⁰

Ten days later he enclosed the speech in a letter to President Johnson, and wrote of the progress of reconstruction in South Carolina:

I find the people very anxious to take the oath prescribed in your Proclamation & return once more to their allegiance to the

⁴⁰ *Columbia Phoenix*, August 15, 1865; *New York Semi-Weekly Tribune*, August 25, 1865; *Winnsboro Tri-Weekly News*, August 17, 1865.

Federal Government. The State Constitution will be changed as you desired when the Convention meets, 13th September.

The only dissatisfaction is on account of colored troops garrisoning the country villages & towns. It is very desirable that white garrisons should be substituted for them as the black troops are a great nuisance & do great mischief amongst the Freed Men.

I hear too that the Military authorities in South Carolina are displeased at my Proclamation appointing civil officers in the State. They think that I have transcended my authority. But the Governors of Mississippi, Alabama & North Carolina have made similar appointments. My object was to get the State back in the Union or under the laws of the United States as soon as possible.

I think I may assure your Excellency that South Carolina will be the very first State in rebellion, to resume her position in the Union, & rally around your administration. From having been the most rebellious she will become the most loyal.⁴¹

⁴¹ August 10, 1865, Andrew Johnson Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Reconstruction under the Johnson Plan

FROM HIS headquarters in Greenville Perry set out energetically to produce order from the chaos and destitution that surrounded him. With no thought of personal advancement, he sought only the most expeditious means of restoring the state to the Union. Numerous appointments had to be made, for all civil government had ended with the occupation by Federal forces. By renaming the former civil officials who had taken the oath of allegiance he speedily set the machinery of state government in motion again. There was the whole hierarchy of Federal officials, however, to be appointed. From the deluge of applications Perry chose the most meritorious—selecting always men within the state, regardless of the fact that most had been Secessionists.¹

On August 23 President Johnson telegraphed Perry that a report was being widely circulated that the Provisional Governors were ignoring Union men and giving preference to rebels in appointments. He urged the importance of encouraging the Union men of the state.²

Perry telegraphed in reply:

The report is wholly untrue. . . . So far as I am concerned all my sympathies are with the Union men but there are many now seeking office as Union men who were never heard of as such in the rebellion. Their latent unionism has been brought to light by the hope of office. I have always given a preference to integrity & capacity & loyalty. There were not a dozen decided Union men in the whole state at the commencement of the rebellion & none

¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 258, 263, 267; Perry Papers, July-November, 1865, *passim*.

² August 23, 1865, Perry Papers.

of them have sought office. The great mass of the people in S. C. are now sincerely loyal & will defend the Union as readily as they once attempted to separate from it. If I have ever given a preference over a pretended Union man it was because I doubted his fitness & principles as well as his unionism.

He followed the telegram with a letter, in which he stated:

In selecting my appointments from those who were equally guilty in their rebellion, I did think, and still think, that they who had the courage and manhood, to imperil their lives in battle, and were maimed and helpless, were more deserving than their compeers, who had meanly skulked from danger and kept out of the war. . . .³

One of Perry's most troublesome duties as Provisional Governor was attending to the two or three thousand applications for pardon from persons in the excepted classes—most of them in the class having taxable property exceeding \$20,000. He had to see that the papers were in proper form, mail them to the President with a note of approval or rejection, and give the petitioner a certificate that his application had been received and forwarded. He did not reject a single applicant who had taken the oath of allegiance. "I did not believe any one was to blame in taking sides with his State, after she had seceded from the Union," he explains in his *Reminiscences*. "He could not remain neutral. The Federal Government had withdrawn all protection. If he went against the State he was guilty of treason."⁴

It was urgent that pardons be secured as speedily as possible in order that the excepted classes might qualify as voters or candidates in the convention election on September 4. But there was much vexatious delay in the process. At Perry's suggestion, C. J. Elford advertised his services as agent for applicants, and went to Washington in their interest, engaging a legal firm there to assist him. Many long-delayed pardons were obtained in this way, but four or five hundred were not

³ August 28, 1865, Andrew Johnson Papers; August 29, 1865, *ibid.*

⁴ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 264, 288.

sent until April, 1866—several months after Perry's administration had ended.⁵

Perry received many appeals from all over the state for redress of various grievances connected with military rule or administration of Federal agencies. Since he could only refer the complaints to the military commander, he was seriously disturbed by continued reports of injustices. Especially galling were the outrageous thefts committed by Treasury agents. Wagonloads of cotton, en route to market, were brazenly seized without warrant; bona fide owners were served with injunction against sale and allowed no chance of proving possession; mules and horses secured to planters by military order were boldly confiscated; unprincipled agents arrested by local officials were rescued by files of Federal soldiers. "The Treasury agents were a cursed set of rogues and scoundrels," says Perry.⁶

Particularly appealing were the numerous letters from low-country refugees. Perry's sympathies were deeply aroused. A woman refugee from Beaufort wrote:

DEAR SIR—We are weary and homesick, and turn to you, as our only hope of getting back our old homes on the Coast.

Why should *we* be wanderers—homeless & houseless, many of us dependent upon Charity, and our homes given to negroes, who surely have done no more for the U. S. Government than we have. . . .

. . . You don't know the destitution of the Refugees from Beaufort & the adjacent Islands—driven from those places at the commencement of the war, their life has been one struggle ever since—they have sold comforts & luxuries, silver & jewelry until now having little or nothing left—their negroes all gone, their *lands* taken,

⁵ James Tupper to Perry, August 22, 1865, Perry Papers; F. W. Pickens to *idem*, October 6, November 23, 1865, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); Thomas G. Prioleau to *idem*, January 21, 1866, *ibid.*; W. Hunter to *idem*, October 26, 1865, Perry Papers; Wm. H. Seward to *idem*, November 11, 17, 1865, *ibid.*; Camden *Weekly Journal*, September 1, 1865; Perry to President Johnson, April 8, 1866, Andrew Johnson Papers.

⁶ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 286-287; Louis DeSaussure to Perry, August 7, 1865, Perry Papers; S. Williams to *idem*, October 21, 1865, *ibid.*; M. Schwartz to *idem*, October 30, 1865, *ibid.*; Sam W. Maurice to *idem*, October 31, 1865, *ibid.*; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, December 9, 1865.

nothing but starvation is before us if those lands are not given back to us. . . .⁷

A planter from John's Island who had served in the Confederate Army till Johnston's surrender wrote from his refuge in Winnsboro to beg any kind of office yielding a salary. His property was in the hands of Negroes, and he had no means of supporting his family.⁸ John Townsend, disunionist propagandist, whose princely estate was now in possession of his slaves, presented a petition signed by fifty or one hundred other refugees from the sea islands asking restoration of their lands. Perry could not help recalling the prophetic words that Petigru had uttered just before the war:

These Parish gentlemen are the biggest fools in the world for wishing disunion. They will suffer more than any others by a civil war. Their homes and property will be at the mercy of the Yankees. Their slaves will leave them, and they will have to flee the country.⁹

He exerted his utmost to have the lands restored, but the Freedmen's Bureau had been granted exclusive jurisdiction over all confiscated and abandoned property in the insurrectionary states, and General Rufus Saxton, assistant commissioner for South Carolina and Georgia, thwarted restoration. Instead of relinquishing control as order and civil government were re-established, the Bureau tightened its hold. By fall it was even seizing plantations in the interior and confiscating more homes in Charleston.¹⁰

But the most serious problem that confronted the state was the utter demoralization of labor, produced in part by the incendiary presence of Negro troops and in part by the false ideas instilled through the Freedmen's Bureau. Letters poured

⁷ Sarah P. Chisolm to Perry, August 15, 1865, Perry Papers.

⁸ Paul T. Gervais to *idem*, July 31, 1865, *ibid*.

⁹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 288-289.

¹⁰ War Department, Bureau of Refugees Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, Circular No. 13, July 26, 1865, Perry Papers; New York *Tribune*, September 8, 1865; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 290; F. J. Moses to Perry, August 30, 1865, Perry Papers; James Conner to *idem*, October 16, 1865, *ibid*.; F. N. Whittier to Mr. Durant, August 26, 1865, *ibid*.

in from every quarter telling of the atrocious conduct of Negro soldiers. Wherever they were stationed, crime, disorderly conduct, and vagrancy among the freedmen ensued. Samuel McGowan wrote Perry expressing relief that a white garrison had supplanted the black at Abbeville, and beseeching that it remain until after Christmas.

The late negro garrison that was here has infused into the mind of the negroes here that they are all *entitled to land* at the end of the year, and we are fearful that there will be serious troubles here about Christmas. . . .

But for God's sake in any event, don't let a negro garrison return here. The garrison which was here . . . has demoralized the negroes of this District *for twenty years to come*. We were on the very point of a war of races. . . .

Worse reports came from the low country, where Negro troops exerted a particularly baneful influence because of the overwhelming preponderance of black population. At St. John's, Berkeley, the Negroes insisted that the whole property of the country was theirs and would soon be distributed among them; some even declared their intention of resisting by force of arms any division of the growing crop. The whites were wholly at the mercy of the blacks, for every shotgun had been taken from them. A planter near Walterboro wrote that eight or nine white citizens had been murdered by Negroes; and though the murderers were well known, no steps had been taken by the officers commanding the black troops to bring them to judgment. A planter from St. Peter's Parish, Beaufort District, wrote in behalf of its citizens:

. . . the Negro Soldiers are doing all in their power to excite a feeling of hatred on the part of the Freedmen towards their former owners, cursing and abusing the few who are still faithful and willing to work for them. In consequence of this state of things, on nearly all of the Plantations in this vicinity work is entirely suspended, the crops are nearly ruined. . . . The exhibition of an aggressive and hostile spirit on the part of the blacks is becoming

more flagrant, and warnings have been given by those disposed to be friendly among them, that a resort to arms may be expected.¹¹

On August 10 Perry wrote Seward:

The complaints are general throughout the State, that the Colored Troops are a great nuisance & that they do infinite mischief with the Freedmen by misrepresenting the purposes & intentions of the Government. They tell them that the lands are to be divided, that they are not to work for their employers, & that the white race is to be driven out of the Country or exterminated. There is great apprehension of danger in the lower part of the State and there have been serious disturbances with the Freedmen.

It would be a happy thing if the colored troops in South Carolina could be removed or confined to the city of Charleston where they are not capable of doing so much mischief.

In a letter a few days later, he stated: "Everything is going on harmoniously in South Carolina, ex[cept] with the colored troops. The people ha[ve] great apprehensions of them & are very desirous of having them withdrawn [and] white troops placed in their stead."¹²

Seward replied that the Secretary of War would take the necessary steps to secure proper behavior on the part of the colored troops, but gave no hope of their removal. "I have to remark on this subject," he wrote, "that the colored as well as the white soldiers are soldiers of the army of the United States, and that no discrimination founded upon color in the assignment to service is intended or can be made by the Government."¹³

Simms wrote in the *Phoenix*:

For what good purpose these troops are kept in the country and scattered over it, it would be difficult to say. If a process were particularly required, for defeating all the hopes of the experiment at

¹¹ S. McGowan to Perry, August 4, 1865, Perry Papers; Sanford W. Barker to *idem*, July 10, 1865, *ibid.*; John W. Burbidge to "Colonel," July 9, 1865, *ibid.* (Baker Coll.); C. I. Colcock to Perry, August 10, 1865, Perry Papers.

¹² Department of State Papers (National Archives); August 14, 1865, *ibid.*

¹³ August 26, 1865, Perry Papers.

converting slave into free labor, and for driving the white population to madness, no better one could be devised.¹⁴

The task of converting a vast slave population into free laborers would have taxed the skill of the most intelligent statesmen of the South, even if accomplished gradually in normal times. But to emancipate an ignorant race suddenly in a period of chaos and destitution and then commit control of these Negroes to persons utterly inexperienced in managing them could but end in total disaster. The higher officials of the Freedmen's Bureau were, in general, honorable and well-meaning, but unsuited for the task. Commissioner Howard was softhearted toward the Negroes and suspicious toward the whites, besides being subject to political influence. Saxton was considered by Johnson too liberal toward his wards, fostering idleness among them. Local agents were often fanatical or dishonest.

But the Bureau made an honest effort to have the Negroes enter into labor contracts and observe them. Howard issued a circular letter in May notifying them that they were free but must work, for the Government would not support them in idleness. Saxton followed it with a similar circular in South Carolina, and established a board in each district to supervise the making of contracts. South Carolinians were sincere in their determination to accept the new labor situation. The Charleston delegation had called on Howard in May and promised that they would cheerfully co-operate with his Bureau in promoting the interests of the freedmen.¹⁵

But the Negroes were suspicious of written contracts, which Radical propagandists told them were papers of re-enslavement. With utter disregard for their obligations, they left growing crops and trekked in hordes toward the seacoast, where they expected to receive lands from the Government. Others remained on the plantations in idleness, living by dep-

¹⁴ September 4, 1865.

¹⁵ Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, pp. 105-107; Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina*, pp. 90-91, 107; *Columbia Phoenix*, June 13, 1865; *New York Tribune*, June 27, 1865.

redations on the community. Twenty-six complainants of Eutawville wrote Perry of the insubordination of the Negro laborers, who were constantly robbing country stores, carrying off wagonloads of corn and cotton from the plantations, and driving off cattle by night. Sixteen owners of rice plantations on the Cooper River petitioned that a license be required for boat traffic, since the river was infested with small boats plied by Negroes who lived by robbing barns, cornhouses, and dwellings, and carrying the goods to Charleston for sale. A resident of St. John's, Berkeley, told how the Negresses on one plantation brickbatted the owner when he came to make contracts. The magistrate of St. James', Santee, wrote of tumultuous conditions in that parish. Negroes who had been arrested by a Federal army officer for driving off a plantation owner and his sons with shotguns, were returned by the Freedmen's Bureau with an insulting order to the owner not to molest them. When quiet had been restored and contracts were being made, the Negroes quit their work to run off with lying complaints to the Bureau in Charleston. Soon a Negro garrison was sent to relieve the white. Thereafter, the freedmen believed that the country was theirs and proceeded to commit every outrage against their proprietors. Since there were only twenty-five white men, all unarmed, and twenty-five hundred Negroes within a radius of ten miles, the situation was fraught with danger.¹⁶

Perry was greatly troubled by his inability to remedy many of these grievances. The perplexities of his position weighed heavily upon him. At the beginning, his efforts were impeded by failure of the military to recognize fully his authority. Though his proclamation had ordered civil judges to resume their duties, provost courts still took cognizance of all kinds of cases. Since the military officials were wholly unversed in civil law, many complaints arose. "Their decisions were flagrantly in conflict with all law, justice and honesty," says

¹⁶ Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 97-98; Peter P. Palmer *et al.* to Perry, August 20, 1865, Perry Papers; Olney Harleston *et al.* to *idem*, August 31, 1865, *ibid.* (Baker Coll.); S. W. Barker to *idem*, September 8, 1865, Perry Papers; Augustus Shoolbred to *idem*, September 6, 1865, *ibid.*

Perry. General Gillmore countermanded Perry's order authorizing magistrates to administer the oath of allegiance, contending that provost marshals alone could administer it. As there were no military garrisons in some of the districts, it was essential that magistrates render this service in order to qualify voters for the convention election.¹⁷ Perry explained the situation to President Johnson and requested his views on the matter. He likewise wrote to Seward, stressing his desire "to prepare the State as soon as possible for resuming her position in the Union." Seward and Johnson telegraphed in reply that there was no objection to administration of oaths by the magistrates.¹⁸

Soon afterwards Perry was granted an interview with General Gillmore in Columbia, and General Meade, commanding the Atlantic states, was also present. Perry presented a request that provost courts be abolished as incompetent and in many places corrupt. Meade inquired if he thought civil courts could do justice to Negroes, who were by state law excluded from giving testimony. Perry answered that they could not until the law was altered by the legislature, and that he was willing meanwhile for provost courts to retain jurisdiction of all cases in which freedmen were concerned. At Gillmore's request, a written agreement to that effect was signed.

Perry also gave an account of the atrocious conduct of colored troops and urged their withdrawal from the state. General Meade replied that he was trying to get rid of them, since he was opposed to having them in the army, but that he had to be cautious in order not to offend public opinion at the North. Gillmore believed that the Negro troops would give the citizens more trouble if disbanded than if retained as organized bodies. He assured Perry, however, that he would put

¹⁷ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 269-270; James Conner to Perry, August 9, 1865, Perry Papers; A. P. Aldrich to *idem*, July 30, August 8, 1865, *ibid.*; F. J. Withers to *idem*, August 18, 1865, *ibid.*; *Columbia Phoenix*, August 17, 1865.

¹⁸ Perry to President Johnson, August 20, 1865, Johnson Papers; *idem* to W. H. Seward, August 20, 1865, Department of State Papers; telegram, Seward to Perry, August 29, 1865, Perry Papers; telegram, Johnson to *idem*, August 29, 1865, *ibid.*

them in forts on the seacoast, where they could do no mischief.¹⁹

Upon termination of the interview, Perry issued a proclamation announcing the agreement in regard to the courts and ordering civil judicial officials to resume their duties. Gillmore confirmed it with General Orders No. 30. The *Phoenix* joyfully announced that all impediments to the proper reestablishment of civil authority had now been withdrawn.²⁰

II

The machinery of civil government was to be restored by the state convention elected on September 4. Though the people showed a sincere desire to comply with the President's terms for readmission to the Union, they were rather apathetic toward the election. "In their almost universal pecuniary distress, and the humiliations of the late overthrow, they have grown reckless and regardless of all politics," declared the *Phoenix*. The press, however, earnestly exhorted the voters to go to the polls and elect their ablest men, since upon the decrees of the convention depended the future of the state. It unanimously advocated electing delegates who would accept the abolition of slavery as "a fixed fact," though an occasional voice urged the convention to demand compensation from the Federal Government.²¹

As the time for convening the state constitutional conventions approached, however, Radical journals propagated the idea that the South was insincere in its acceptance of the results of the war. The New York *Tribune* accused the late slaveholders of clinging to the hope that slavery might somehow be restored—"in essence, if not in name." Meanwhile it

¹⁹ James G. Gibbes to Perry, August 13 [1865], Perry Papers; Lieut. John Walton to *idem*, August 31, 1865, *ibid.*; General Q. A. Gillmore to *idem*, August 18, 1865, *ibid.*; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 270-272; Columbia *Phoenix*, August 17, 28, 1865; New York *Tribune*, September 12, 1865.

²⁰ Columbia *Phoenix*, September 5, 19, 1865; Camden *Weekly Journal*, September 22, 1865; New York *Tribune*, September 15, 1865.

²¹ Columbia *Phoenix*, August 3, 4, 19, 25, 30, September 4, 7, 13, 1865; Charleston *Daily News*, August 15, 26, 1865; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, September 4, 1865; Camden *Weekly Journal*, August 4, 1865.

continued agitation for enfranchisement of the Negro, demanding that the Unionists of the South should be put on a footing of political equality "with those who instigated and upheld the Rebellion."²²

Modern critics deplore the shortsightedness of the state conventions in not granting qualified Negro suffrage to disarm the Radicals. There were broad-minded men in South Carolina who advocated an educational and property qualification for white and black alike—among them A. Toomer Porter, Joseph Le Conte, and Perry. But the people of the state were utterly opposed to enfranchising freedmen. Perry was persuaded by his friends—against his better judgment—to omit the recommendation from his Message to the convention, as it would only prove distracting.²³ The *Columbia Phoenix* railed at the North for urging Negro suffrage in the South—especially in South Carolina and several other states where the black population far outnumbered the white—when it was denied by most of the Northern states, where the scant Negro population would have rendered it relatively harmless. It voiced the firm determination of the whites of the South to maintain political and social superiority over the Negro, depicting the disastrous results that had followed elevation of the emancipated blacks to equality in the British West Indies.²⁴

The election brought forth only a light vote throughout the state—partly because Johnson's telegram confirming power of magistrates to administer the oath came too late for the people generally to be informed. In Charleston only one third of the usual vote was cast, and in Greenville only 850 went to the polls. But able men were elected—among them Wade Hampton, F. W. Pickens, Orr, Samuel McGowan, David L. Wardlaw, Edward Frost, and Alfred Huger. Perry's son, William

²² August 8, 18, September 12, 19, 1865.

²³ Joseph Le Conte, *Autobiography*, p. 236; Porter, *Led On! Step by Step*, p. 199; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 275.

²⁴ August 3, 28, 1865.

Hayne, was elected from Greenville, along with T. C. Bolling, J. P. Boyce, and Dr. J. P. Latimer.²⁵

Perry established his headquarters at the Nickerson Hotel in Columbia for the convention, which opened in the Baptist Church on September 13. The conservative temper of the gathering was immediately manifest. Wardlaw was elected president, and a refractory resolution by A. P. Aldrich signifying that South Carolina awaited only an opportunity to deliver itself from unconstitutional rule aroused indignant protest.

Pickens, to show South Carolina's sincere desire to conform to the President's requirements, hastened to introduce two ordinances on the opening day: one repealing the Ordinance of Secession; the other declaring that slavery had been abolished by the fortunes of war and the proclamation of the President, and that the state acquiesced.²⁶ Perry telegraphed happily to the President:

The State Convention assembled today one hundred (100) members present. The ablest body ever convened in the State. Resolutions of discontent were offered and received only five (5) votes—laid on the table and refused to be printed. I send in my message tomorrow, which is a strong one, sustaining your reconstruction policy. All is going on well.²⁷

On the following day he sent a Message to the convention suggesting measures that he considered necessary to restore the state to the Union and democratize its constitution. First, he urged cheerful compliance with the President's proclamation:

. . . Instead of dwelling on the past, and grieving over its errors and misfortunes, let us, with manly fortitude, look to the future,

²⁵ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, p. 37; *Columbia Phoenix*, September 6-9, 12, 1865; *Winnsboro Tri-Weekly News*, August 24, September 5, 1865; *New York Tribune*, September 12, 15, 1865.

²⁶ Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 42-45, 52, 56; *Charleston Courier*, September 14, 1865; *Journal of the Convention of the People of South Carolina Held in Columbia, S. C., September, 1865, Together with the Ordinances, Reports, Resolutions, etc.* (Columbia, 1865), pp. 6-7.

²⁷ September 13, 1865, Andrew Johnson Papers.

and accommodate ourselves to the circumstances which surround us, and which cannot be changed or avoided.

The President of the United States has manifested a generous and patriotic solicitude for the restoration of the Southern States to all their civil and political rights, under the Constitution and laws of the United States. He desires to see the Federal Union reconstructed as it was before the secession of those States; and he will oppose the centralization of power in Congress, and the infringement of the constitutional rights of the States, with the same zeal, energy and power with which he resisted the assumed right of secession on the part of the States. In order to accomplish this re-union of the States, the President desires that South Carolina, as well as all the other States in rebellion, should accept as inevitable and unavoidable the great final results of the war.

African slavery . . . is gone, dead forever, never to be revived or hoped for in the future of this State. Under the war-making power, the military authorities of the United States have abolished slavery in all of the seceding States. The oath you have solemnly taken . . . requires you, in good faith, to abolish slavery in your new or amended Constitution. . . . Until this is done, we shall be kept under military rule, and the negroes will be protected as "freedmen" by the whole military force of the United States. . . .

. . . By a wise, just and humane treatment of your "freedmen" and women, you may attach them to you as strongly in their new conditions as they were whilst your slaves. . . . It is to be expected that so great and sudden a change as this in the condition of the negro will produce, at first, confusion, idleness and dissatisfaction. This, however, will only be temporary. Time and experience must bring order and system. The "freedman" will soon find out that he must work or perish. Legislation will necessarily be required to regulate the relative duties of the employer and employee.

Another presidential requirement for readmission to the Union—repudiation of the state debt contracted in aid of the Confederacy—he did not mention in his Message. Instead, he launched into an earnest plea for adoption of the republican reforms that he had advocated for thirty years:

It is very desirable that you should avail yourselves of the present opportunity of reforming and popularizing the State Constitution

in several particulars. It is the reproach of South Carolina abroad that her Constitution is less popular and republican in its provisions than that of any other State in the Union. And it is thought by many that to this cause alone may be traced the origin of that discontent and dissatisfaction with the Federal Government which, after being nursed for thirty-three or four years, ended in the secession and rebellion of thirteen or fourteen States.

He vigorously attacked the parish system of representation in the Senate, showing that rapid growth of the up country during the past seventy-five years had rendered reapportionment absolutely necessary. The system was entirely arbitrary, since a parish with twenty or thirty voters had the same representation as a district of the up country with 3,000 voters. He advocated that the judicial district be made the unit of representation in the Senate, each district to have one senator, except Charleston, which should have three—two for the city of Charleston and one for the election district surrounding. He advised that population and taxation continue to be the basis of representation in the House, but generously recommended, as due the low country, that the freedmen be included in the count—probably according to the three-fifths ratio of the Federal Congress.

As for suffrage, he approved the democratic act of 1810 granting it to all free white men of twenty-one who had been residents of the state two years and of the election district six months. In regard to the Negro, he said:

To extend this universal suffrage to the "freedmen" in their present ignorant and degraded condition, would be little less than folly and madness. It would be giving to the man of wealth and large landed possessions in the State a most undue influence in all elections. He would be enabled to march to the polls, with his two or three hundred "freedmen" as employees, voting as he directed, and control all elections. . . . In Connecticut, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and several other non-slaveholding States, at the North, free negroes and colored persons are entirely excluded from voting. In most of the Northern States there is a property qualification required of all voters, which excludes them. . . .

The radical Republican party North are looking with great interest to the action of the Southern States in reference to negro suffrage, and whilst they admit that a man should be able to read and write and have a property qualification in order to vote, yet they contend that there should be no distinction between voters on account of color. They forget that this is a white man's government, and intended for white men only; and that the Supreme Court of the United States has decided that the negro is not an American citizen under the Federal Constitution. That each and every State of the Union has the unquestioned right of deciding for herself who shall exercise the right of suffrage, is beyond all dispute. You will settle this grave question as the interest and honor of the State demand.

It is to be regretted that he did not, with his accustomed independence, recommend the qualified Negro suffrage he desired.

Further to democratize the state constitution, he recommended that election of governor, lieutenant-governor, and presidential electors be taken from the General Assembly and given to the people as in all the other states, and that the Assembly vote *viva voce* in all elections. He also advised that the executive department be strengthened by extending the term of the governor and allowing him to appoint state officers with the advice and consent of the Senate, and by making the lieutenant-general *ex-officio* president of the Senate.

He advocated several minor reforms making for economy and efficiency: consolidating the two Treasury Departments of the state into one; eliminating the Charleston offices of the secretary of state and surveyor general; allowing the Court of Appeals to sit only at the capital (it then sat at Charleston also).

He admonished the convention to provide for election of the legislature the second Monday in October in order that it might arrange for election of congressmen and United States senators before Congress assembled in December.

He spoke hopefully of economic conditions, prophesying that the South would recover when transportation enabled the sale of cotton to restore a circulating medium and when

Northern capitalists and European immigrants invested in Southern real estate.

Gloomy as the present may seem, the future will be bright and glorious. Nothing is ever likely to occur again to mar the harmony of the Union. The great cause of dissension between the two sections has been removed. There are no rival interests. The North and the South are mutually necessary to each other, and all the pursuits of the one are dependent on those of the other. . . . As long as civilization continues, this great Republic will flourish and increase in numbers, wealth and grandeur. . . .

South Carolina, as an integral part of this great power, must partake of its richness and prosperity. The abolition of slavery will give new energy and self-reliance to her people, stimulate industry and promote economy in all the vocations of life. In less than ten years we shall realize in the loss of slavery a blessing in disguise, to ourselves and our children.²⁸

The Message received very favorable notice in the press of the state. The *Keowee Courier* commented: "It is an able, fearless paper—patriotic in tone, of generous temper, and fine diction." The *Sumter Watchman* observed: "It is a plain, pointed, and well written document, reflecting, no doubt, the true interests and policy of the State, at the present juncture of affairs." Even the low-country press accepted its recommendations as essential for restoration of civil rule, though abolition of the parish system would end control of the state government by the coastal area. The *Charleston Daily News* called the Message "direct, frank and lucid," and presumed that the two great constitutional adaptations proposed—abolition of slavery and popularization of the constitution—would receive the approbation of the state.²⁹

But the Message was criticized as rabidly disloyal by Radicals in the North. To Perry's statement, "They forget that

²⁸ *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 11-19; *Columbia Phoenix*, September 15, 1865; *Winnsboro Tri-Weekly News*, September 26, 1865. The Message was read to the convention by Perry's son, William Hayne, whom he had appointed private secretary (*ibid.*).

²⁹ *Keowee Courier*, September 23, 1865; *Sumter Watchman*, September 20, 1865; *Charleston Daily News*, September 18, 1865.

this is a white man's government," the New York *Tribune* retorted:

We may be excused for forgetting what we never knew. . . . The difficulty with Gov. Perry is, he wants to put the clock four years back. We assure him it is impossible. We assure him in all kindness that South Carolina must present herself at the doors of the House next December with words quite other than his on her repentant lips, if she looks to see those doors fly open to her delegation.

As to his recommendation of legislation for the freedmen, it insisted that he expected to establish a system of compulsory labor resembling serfdom.³⁰

The Message was well received by the convention, which had a majority of up-country members. Proposals which low-country senators had blocked for thirty years in the legislature now fell on receptive ears. Up-country leaders like Orr, Francis Pickens, and George D. Tillman pushed through the measures that finally secured for South Carolina a republican constitution and ended the aristocratic rule of the parishes. The Columbia *Phoenix* regarded Orr as leader in the convention, and the new constitution as largely his handiwork.³¹ Sidney Andrews conceded Orr much influence, but wrote that Perry dominated the scene:

The chief man in the Convention is Benjamin F. Perry, Provisional Governor of the State; not that he himself is on the list of delegates, but that his position, in the peculiar circumstances of the hour, makes his word and wish of very unusual significance. The executive office has been removed here for the time being; the rooms of the Governor at the hotel are full at all hours when the Convention is not in session; the Governor sometimes spends the whole day at the Convention; his son and private secretary is one of the delegates; it is an almost every-hour occurrence, in the debates, that the question is asked, "Is that view approved by the Provisional Governor?" or that the remark is made, "I think we had

³⁰ Editorial, September 22, 1865.

³¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 276; South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1865, *passim*; Columbia *Phoenix*, September 27, 1865.

better consult the Governor first." So it may be said that he is the leader of the Convention. He is a tall, large, straight man, who carries a gold-headed cane and wears gold-bowed spectacles. Besides this, he has a very long, large nose, and a very long, large, prominent chin. He wears a wig, and has a smoothly shaven face. He looks like a man of power, and has an inoffensively self-satisfied appearance.³²

According to Perry's account, however, he was so busily engaged at the hotel with people presenting grievances, seeking pardons, or consulting on other matters that he visited the convention only once or twice.³³

Before remodeling the state constitution, it was of prime importance for the convention to nullify the Ordinance of Secession and abolish slavery. On the third day the Ordinance was repealed by a vote of 105 to 3.³⁴ Perry was pleased with the spirit manifested by the members. He wrote to Seward:

Our State Convention is going on very well with their good work, & are disposed to get the old Palmetto State back into the Union once more. They have repealed the Ordinance of Secession which I thought was wholly unnecessary as it was a nullity at first.³⁵

The proposition to abolish slavery called forth a heated debate. Only a few irreconcilables were actually opposed to meeting the requirement; but, as in the other Southern states, there was a sharp division between those who were willing to declare its abolition by state action and those who wished the "historical fact" of its having been abolished by Federal action to be clearly stated. Many of the latter, no doubt, expected the slaveowners to be compensated. Finally Orr, at the instigation of Perry, sharply reminded the delegates that the state had seceded to save slavery, had been defeated on the battlefield, and must now bow to the terms of the conqueror—

³² Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 49-50.

³³ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 288.

³⁴ *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 22, 27-29, 181; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 52-53; *New York Tribune*, September 19, 1865.

³⁵ September 18, 1865, Department of State Papers.

which, after all, were very liberal. But the convention refused to vote for abolition without a clear statement of the "historical fact," and adopted the following amendment to the state constitution by a vote of 98 to 8: "The slaves in South Carolina having been emancipated by the action of the United States authorities, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, . . . shall ever be re-established in this State."³⁶

No such sweeping support, however, was given Perry's recommendations for democratization of the state constitution. Low-country members attempted to defeat them by introducing resolutions to restrict the action of the convention to measures necessary to restore the state to the Union and re-establish civil government—only to have the resolutions immediately tabled by the up-country majority. With their forces strongly marshaled for action, the up-country members on the seventh day secured adoption of Perry's equitable system of representation for the Senate by a vote of 80 to 31. As Perry had confidently forecast to Seward, "the odious Parish representation" was finally abolished. At last the up country was in control of the state. Sidney Andrews thus depicts its jubilation:

The people of the State are wretchedly poor; but on the evening of the day in which this great victory was gained, I heard—and for the first time since the Convention met—heard, in the rooms of the leading up-country delegates, a lively and long-continued fire of champagne corks. Peace to the ashes of the parish system!³⁷

Next day the low-country members attempted to retrieve their loss. When the Legislative Committee reported in favor of retaining the old basis of representation in the House—white population and taxation, Robert Dozier of Georgetown proposed that all inhabitants, white and black, be counted. This led to a storm of opposition from up-country delegates,

³⁶ South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 7, 22, 30, 59-65; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 56-67; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 277; Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, p. 77.

³⁷ South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 21-22, 69-71; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 75-81; Columbia *Phoenix*, September 21, 1865; Perry to W. H. Seward, July 21, 1865, Department of State Papers.

since it would ultimately give control of the House to the low country. Charleston delegates appealed to their magnanimity, reminding them that the up country now controlled the Senate, and also that it was inconsistent to exclude Negroes from the body politic as represented in the state legislature when they were an element in congressional representation. But up-country delegates—Orr among them—argued that it would be but an entering wedge for Negro suffrage. "Adopt this amendment, and you pass the political power of the State over into the hands of the negro," said Samuel McGowan. "This is a white man's government," declared J. P. Boyce. It was a doctrine endorsed by the conventions in all the Southern states. When Aldrich moved that three fifths of the Negroes be counted, as Perry had recommended in his Message, the convention would make no compromise. The old basis was retained.³⁸

Though nearly all the members were vigorously opposed to granting political rights to Negroes, they were determined to protect the security of their lives, persons, and property. It was necessary, therefore, to devise a system of laws for this purpose, since the former stringent code for free Negroes—framed to prevent demoralization of the vast slave population by the few freedmen—was now inapplicable. The convention passed a resolution directing the Provisional Governor to appoint a commission of two persons to prepare and submit to the next legislature "a code for the regulation of labor and the protection and government of the colored population of the State." Though the measure was immediately attacked by the Radical press as an inhumane attempt to degrade the Negro, it was passed with the sincere purpose of elevating his former

³⁸ South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 81-84, 86-94; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 68-75, 82; Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, pp. 77-79. Representation was more equalized by assessing taxes according to the actual value of land instead of the arbitrary system by which Charleston had paid nearly one third of the impost in the state. The low country lost further by a proviso limiting representation in the House to twelve from one election district; heretofore, Charleston had had twenty (*Charleston Courier*, September 29, 1865).

status and protecting his rights as well as those of his white employer.³⁹

The convention adopted most of Perry's other proposals for democratization of the state government. After considerable debate, it passed a resolution in favor of popular election of presidential electors and requested the Governor to communicate it to the next legislature. It adopted amendments to the constitution providing for popular election of governor and lieutenant-governor, lengthening the governor's term from two to four years, granting him a qualified veto, and making the lieutenant-governor president of the Senate. It abolished property qualifications for membership in both houses of the General Assembly and adopted viva voce voting. It created district courts to have special jurisdiction in cases involving persons of color, consolidated the Treasury Departments, and eliminated the state offices in Charleston.⁴⁰

Throughout its session the convention manifested a "laudable spirit," writes Perry. "Their sole object was to redeem and regenerate the State, restore her prosperity and increase the future happiness of the whole." To enable the Provisional Governor to negotiate with the President and other United States officials more directly, especially in the matter of petitions of citizens for pardons and restitution of property, the convention authorized him to appoint an agent to Washington. Perry appointed William H. Trescot, whom he had already employed in several cases of the kind. The delegates also drew up a Memorial beseeching the release of Jefferson Davis, Alexander Stephens, Governor Magrath, and George Trenholm, and sent a committee to present it to the President.⁴¹

³⁹ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 726-727; *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 103, 166; Andrews, *The South Since the War*, pp. 86-88; *New York Tribune*, October 3, 1865; Perry to W. H. Seward, *September 23*, 1865, Department of State Papers.

⁴⁰ *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 49-50, 68, 98-99, 105, 117, 123; "Constitution of the State of South Carolina," *ibid.*, pp. 139-152; editorial, *Charleston Courier*, September 29, 1865.

⁴¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 274; *South Carolina Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 29-30, 125, 165, 167; William Henry Trescot to Perry, August [n.d.], September 6, 1865, Perry Papers; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 1, 1865.

As Perry had recommended, the convention set the second Monday in October for election of the legislature and governor. Two days before adjournment, ninety-two members drew up a public letter to Orr requesting him to become a candidate for governor. The Columbia *Phoenix* expressed the feeling of many when it declared Orr especially fitted for the position, but remonstrated against the attempt of a caucus to dictate to the people.⁴²

Frequent letters and telegrams of Perry to the President and Secretary of State reveal his gratification with the work of the convention. Toward the end of the session he wrote Seward:

I am happy to have it in my power to inform you that the State Convention of South Carolina have done well & shown a proper & loyal spirit throughout all their proceedings. . . .

They have in fact carried out all of my recommendations which were important. . . .

The Legislature will have a great deal to do in legislating for the new condition of affairs in South Carolina. But be assured that the "freedmen" will be amply protected by our Legislature. They have lost the protection of their [masters] & must now be protected by the Law.

On the same day he sent a long letter to the President summarizing the important measures passed by the convention. "I can assure your Excellency," he wrote, "that the members are loyal & disposed to do their duty in good faith."⁴³ The convention adopted a resolution cordially endorsing the Administration of Johnson. Before returning to Greenville, Perry proudly sent him a copy of the new constitution.⁴⁴ Its adoption was the crowning triumph of his life. In 1873 he wrote:

This was very gratifying to me, as I had all my life urged these measures of reform on the State, and now had the pleasure of

⁴² September 26, 27, 29, October 1, 1865.

⁴³ September 23, 1865, Department of State Papers; September 23, 1865, Johnson Papers.

⁴⁴ South Carolina *Convention Journal*, 1865, pp. 126, 169; Perry to Johnson, September 28, 1865, Johnson Papers.

seeing them, at last, all adopted, with great unanimity. The first thirty years of my political life, had been a series of failures and disappointments. When the State seceded, I wrote to a friend that my course and advice had scarcely ever been followed by the people of South Carolina, and this destruction of the Federal Union was the crowning act of all my political misfortunes and failures. I had most zealously and honestly tried to serve my State, and not a single success or honor had rewarded my services. How little did I then suppose it possible to live to see all my measures of reform adopted, and myself honored, within one short twelve months, with the offices of District Attorney, Judge, Governor and United States Senator.⁴⁵

III

During the convention Perry had issued two proclamations to aid in restoring order in the state. One called for the formation of a volunteer militia police in each judicial district "to act under and be auxiliary to" the military garrison. The plan was suggested by Brigadier General Ames for apprehending the lawless persons who were thieving, marauding, and committing acts of violence in localities remote from the military garrisons at the courthouses. The other proclamation appointed six special aides to the governor from different parts of the state to "receive and communicate" to him "all information which they may deem advisable as to the condition of the State, its citizens, the freedmen, the home police, and the garrisons."⁴⁶ Since there were very small Federal garrisons in many districts—in some cases only a lieutenant and twenty men at the county seat—these measures proved highly salutary. The press endorsed them, reminding the people that even where quiet now prevailed, there might be disturbance after the Federal troops were removed. Informal public meetings or groups of leading citizens in nearly every district en-

⁴⁵ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 276. For an estimate of the importance of the work of the convention in the evolution of South Carolina government, see J. H. Wolfe, "The South Carolina Constitution of 1865 as a Democratic Document," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1942, pp. 18-29.

⁴⁶ *Camden Weekly Journal*, September 22, October 20, 1865; *Winnsboro Tri-Weekly News*, September 21, 1865; Perry to President Johnson, September 23, 1865, Johnson Papers.

listed companies and reported to the military commanders for duty. Arms and needed supplies were furnished by the Federal Government. As the freedmen were growing more and more restless under the delusion that lands would be divided at Christmas, the militia did much to relieve the apprehensions of the people.⁴⁷

In October the delegation appointed by the convention—D. L. Wardlaw, Alfred Huger, and Thomas Dawkins—had a harmonious conference with the President, in which he intimated that Governor Magrath would soon be released on parole. The other prisoners mentioned in the Memorial had already been discharged. Several days previously, in an interview with Trescot, Johnson had generously offered to consider immediately the pardons of any persons important to the industrial interests of the state. Trescot found a number already granted at the Attorney General's office—including all members of the convention except Hampton and Pickens—and sent them on to Perry. In the matter of abandoned lands, the President referred him to General Howard, whom he found very conciliatory. Howard announced that he was in favor of restoring these lands to their owners as soon as pardoned, and that he would be in Columbia soon and would like to confer with Perry and as many South Carolina planters as possible. Trescot reported that the President and Howard were both aware that General Saxton was responsible for the false impression among the freedmen about distribution of lands, and that the President had asked if he could suggest someone who would be more acceptable to the state.⁴⁸

When Howard arrived in Columbia on October 21, he did

⁴⁷ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 285-286; A. C. Garlington to Perry, September 26, 1865, Perry Papers; W. L. Trenholm to *idem*, September 25, 29, October 9, 19, 1865, *ibid.*; D. A. Dickert to *idem*, October 2, 1865, *ibid.*; S. McGowan to *idem*, October 5, 1865, *ibid.*; R. M. Durant to *idem*, November 30, 1865, *ibid.*; Ben Allston to *idem*, November 26, 1865, *ibid.*; Sam W. Maurice to *idem*, December 3, 1865, *ibid.*; Columbia *Phoenix*, October 7, 11, 14, November 1, 1865; Sumter *Watchman*, October 11, 25, December 13, 1865; Keowee *Courier*, October 14, 1865.

⁴⁸ Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VI, 351-352; Columbia *Phoenix*, October 17, 19, 21, 1865; William Henry Trescot to Perry, October 9, 11, 13, 1865, Perry Papers.

much to alleviate the distrust of the Freedmen's Bureau provoked by the policy of Saxton. Perry could not be present, but Trescot and a number of planter refugees from the low country met him. Howard announced that their lands would be restored, but that they must absorb as laborers the Negroes who resided on them. Agreement was also made that labor contracts would be arranged in each district by a board of three, composed of an agent of the Bureau and a representative of the employer and laborer respectively. Two days previously Saxton had issued a circular correcting the impression prevailing among freedmen that the Federal Government would give them lands, and urging them to make contracts at once for 1866.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ O. O. Howard to Perry, October 21, 1865, Perry Papers; C. H. Howard to *idem*, November 7, 1865, *ibid.*; Columbia *Phoenix*, October 22, 1865; circular in Camden *Weekly Journal*, November 10, 1865; Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina*, pp. 95-98.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Installation of the New Regime

THE ELECTION for governor and members of the legislature on October 18 aroused little excitement; only about one third of the voters went to the polls. Much confusion had been caused, however, by the unauthorized nomination of Hampton for governor in several newspapers of the state. Though he declined being a candidate, he received a heavy vote in every district except his own, Richland, where he went to the polls and requested his friends not to vote for him. Final returns showed Orr victorious by a vote of only 9,928 to Hampton's 9,185. Orr was so mortified that he considered declining, but was dissuaded by Armistead Burt. A public letter from Hampton in the *Phoenix* of November 15 had a conciliatory effect. He thanked the people for their support and urged them to let no party strife divert them from the great work of reanimating "our prostrate and bleeding state."¹

When the legislature assembled in extra session on October 25, the press re-echoed the admonition, reminding the members that their chief duty was to enact such laws as would restore South Carolina speedily to the Union.² A. P. Aldrich, Speaker of the House, dramatically impressed upon his fellow-members their deep responsibility to the state.³

Since the governor-elect would not be inaugurated until the regular session in November, it was Perry who convened

¹ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, p. 43; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 278-279; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 11, 14, 19-28, November 1, 15, 29, 1865; *Charleston Daily News*, October 19, 20, 1865; *New York Tribune*, October 24, 31, November 3, 1865; *Keowee Courier*, November 25, 1865.

² *Columbia Phoenix*, October 25, 1865; *Sumter Watchman*, October 25, 1865.

³ *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 5-6.

the extra session. He had applied to Seward for instructions as to when his functions as Provisional Governor should cease, and had been notified to continue his duties until relieved by express orders from the President.⁴ On the second day of the session he delivered his Message, giving a résumé of the progress in reconstruction under his administration and recommending further measures for "the interest and welfare" of the state. South Carolina, he proudly reported, was as far advanced as any other Southern state in reconstruction, though he had received his appointment several months after other provisional governors. After summarizing the democratic changes made in the state constitution by the convention, he urged the industrial reforms of which he had been a lifelong advocate:

Such, gentlemen, is the new Constitution under which you have assembled, and which, it is hoped, will inspire the people of South Carolina with new democratic zeal and energy in developing, intellectually, and physically, the talent and resources of the State. It is true that, under *the old regime*, South Carolina has given the Republic a bright galloxy of names which she may well be proud of; but her material prosperity as a State has not kept pace with that of her Southern sisters. Her population has been moving to the South-west till there are, at this time, almost as many native South Carolinians living in other States as there are in this State. They have drained the State, too, of her wealth and energies. For the last thirty or forty years we have likewise been oblivious of all internal improvement in our fruitless and vexatious supervision of the action of the Federal Government. Agriculture has been neglected, manufactures almost ignored, and commerce despised. Foreign immigration, which has filled other States with wealth and population, developed their resources and made them happy, prosperous and powerful, has been discouraged in South Carolina. Her riches have been exhausted by her dependence on others for almost every thing she consumed or needed. We have been dependent on the Western States for our horses, mules, cattle and hogs, bacon, lard and beef. From the Northern States, we have received the

⁴ Perry to Seward, August 28, 1865, Department of State Papers; Seward to Perry, September 29, 1865, Perry Papers.

furniture of our houses, and the implements of our farms and plantations, the carriages in which we rode, and the clothes which we wore.

This policy must no longer be continued. It should be the pride of every farmer and planter in the State to raise, grow or make everything which he uses or needs. Slavery has been abolished, and labor made more honorable as well as more necessary. They who have heretofore spent their lives in ease and idleness will be forced to work. Planting and the learned professions are no longer the only honorable means of livelihood for our young men. They must become tradesmen, manufacturers, artisans and mechanics. Immigration of industrious foreigners must be encouraged. Then manufactures will spring up, commerce will revive, and we shall become an independent people.

But the labor problem was the most pressing with which the legislature had to deal. Perry announced that, by order of the convention, he was having a freedmen's code prepared by Judge Wardlaw and Armistead Burt, who would soon have it ready to submit to the legislature. He thus urged the importance of its adoption:

It becomes your urgent duty, gentlemen, to make immediate provision for the protection and government of the freedmen and colored people who have been so suddenly released from slavery in their ignorance and destitution. This is alike due to humanity and justice, as well as the imperative necessities of society. The negro has lost the protection of his master, and he must now be protected by the law. This is expected of you by the President and the Federal Congress, and will remove all pretense for military rule in the State, as well as facilitate your speedy restoration to the Union and self-government. The negro is innocent of all that he has gained and all that you have lost, and he is entitled to your sympathy and kindness, your protection and guidance. . . .

In this connection he recommended establishment of district courts for the trial of freedmen as authorized by the convention.

Turning to other important matters, he transmitted, with a few words of endorsement, the resolution of the convention

recommending popular election of presidential electors. He urged election of United States senators and representatives as early as possible, and recommended that the legislature alleviate the financial distress of the state by continuing the stay law (with an amendment allowing collection of interest) and issuing bonds. He stressed the importance of reorganizing the militia, and advised appropriations for reopening South Carolina College—suggesting that it be converted into a university, as few young men could now defray their expenses for four years of college and professional training afterwards. He advocated adoption of Petigru's codification of the statute laws of the state.

He reported the Bank of the State in a "most embarrassed and crippled condition" and left its rehabilitation to the discretion of the legislature. As for the war debt, he declared: "Whatever may be the state of our finances, I am sure South Carolina will never sully her honor by any act of repudiation. If we have lost everything else, let us, on that account, be more careful of maintaining the honor of the State." He did not seem to regard compliance with this presidential exhortation as essential for return to the Union, saying in conclusion:

. . . I would urge you, gentlemen, to look only to the future in your legislation, and forget, so far as you can, the past. There is much to hope for and live for, yet, in South Carolina. . . . South Carolina presented a unit after her act of secession, and she is now united as one man in returning to the Union; and will be as true and loyal to her plighted faith as any State north of Mason's and Dixon's line. . . .⁵

The Message was well received by the press. The *Sumter Watchman* pronounced it an "able, wise and patriotic document" that gave the true course of the state for prosperity. The *Columbia Phoenix* commended especially the Governor's appeal for diversification of industry, his stress on the importance of legislation for protection and government of the col-

⁵ Governor's Message No. 1, in *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 13-21; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 27, 1865.

ored population, and his positive stand against repudiation of the state debt.⁶

On the following day Perry transmitted to the legislature the code proposed by the commission, and recommended it as "a perfect system of law adapted to our new state of affairs," necessary both for the protection of colored persons and enforcement of their labor. Without it there would be "the greatest confusion, idleness and crime" at the beginning of the New Year, and the Federal authorities would retain their military forces throughout the state to protect the freedmen. With proper legislation, however, he felt sure the President would readmit the state to the Union. "Then your Senators and Members of Congress cannot, with any show of propriety, be excluded from their seats," he said.

The code consisted of four bills to regulate the status of freedmen:

(1) A Bill preliminary to the legislation induced by the Emancipation of Slaves.

(2) A Bill to establish and regulate the domestic relations of Persons of Color, and to amend the law in relation to Paupers, Vagrancy and Bastardy.

(3) A Bill to establish District Courts.

(4) A Bill to amend the Criminal Law.⁷

Burt and Wardlaw, two of the most eminent jurists of the state, had drawn up a comprehensive system of laws extending full personal and property rights to the freedmen, and making regulations which, from their long experience as slaveholders, they considered necessary to render the new labor system effective. The freed Negro was given a status far above that of the former slave, but certain restrictive provisions attempted to afford him guardianship during the transitory stage to full citizenship. Burt's purpose, like Perry's, was to protect the Negro as well as the white man in the enjoyment of his rights.

⁶ *Sumter Watchman*, November 1, 1865; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 27, 28, 1865.

⁷ Governor's Message No. 2, in *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 24-25.

"My idea," he wrote, "[is] that philanthropy and benevolence to the negro, should be essential elements in labour and all other regulations. I have made them so."⁸ Conversant with conditions in Abbeville, where the freedmen were especially disorderly and idle, he set stringent punishments for misdemeanors and vagrancy among Negroes, allowing corporal punishment, hard labor, and fines to be imposed. On the other hand, he specified: "But no punishment more degrading than imprisonment shall be imposed on a white person for a crime not infamous."

A few other racial discriminations, such as prohibiting colored persons from engaging in any pursuits other than agricultural or domestic without a license, gave the Radicals a tool for attacking the "Black Code" as flagrant evidence that the South intended virtually restoring slavery. Provision of the code for compulsory apprenticeship in certain cases was loudly proclaimed as the first step in the process. Yet the vagrancy and apprenticeship laws were no harsher than those enforced in many of the Northern states, and in some instances not so harsh. The wise and humane features of the code far outweighed the defects. Freedmen were granted the right to enter marriage contracts, testify in court, sue and be sued; they were protected in the terms of their contracts as securely as the employers; they were insured against eviction without cause and against other cruel treatment.⁹

In recommending these stringent statutes for control of the freedmen, Perry, like the other provisional governors, was blind to Northern sentiment. Though the President's conservative policy was then meeting approbation, there was a widespread feeling in the North that the freedmen were wards

⁸ Armistead Burt to Perry, October 11, 1865, Perry Papers; Perry to Burt, October 15, 1865, *ibid.*

⁹ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 724-730; Webster, *Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina*, pp. 107-108; New York Tribune, November 28, 1865; full text of code in *The Statutes At Large of South Carolina* (Columbia, 1875), XIII, 245-285, and in *Columbia Phoenix*, December 20, 21, 1865; Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, I, 294-312. For a detailed analysis of the code, see Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 48-51.

of the nation to be protected from the designs of the slavocracy. The Radicals needed only to play on this sentiment to strengthen their power. The "Black Codes" furnished effectual political ammunition. Already the Northern press was condemning Governor Benjamin G. Humphrey of Mississippi for his Message a week or so earlier recommending a code. But Perry seemed oblivious of the current of thought and opinion, thinking only of some practical means of relieving chaotic labor conditions in the state.¹⁰

The commission's report was received favorably by the South Carolina legislature, which proceeded, without material alterations, to push the bills through second reading. Resolutions offered in the House prohibiting Negroes from retaining possession of arms and ammunition, or practicing any mechanical art or trade (unless already engaged in) without serving an apprenticeship were incorporated.¹¹

Perry's other recommendations—encouragement of European immigration, continuance of the stay law, reorganization of the militia, popular election of presidential electors—were introduced as bills or resolutions and referred to appropriate committees. But final legislation on them was postponed until the regular session. On October 28 Perry sent another Message communicating "the very satisfactory" report of Trescot on abandoned lands and pardons, and recommending his retention as agent at Washington. The legislature agreed, and empowered Trescot to act on seizure of cotton by Treasury agents also.¹²

On October 30 the legislature went into the election of United States senators, and Perry was elected for the long term on the first ballot. The vote stood: Perry 109, J. L. Manning 24, William Henry Trescot 4, F. W. Pickens 3, W. W. Boyce 2, R. W. Barnwell 1. It had been generally understood

¹⁰ Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 81-85, 98-105, 110.

¹¹ South Carolina *House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 25, 38-39, 65, 73, 77-82, 85; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 54, 65.

¹² South Carolina *House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 32, 43-44, 55, 67, 75; Governor's Message No. 3, *ibid.*, p. 33; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, p. 75.

that Perry would be elected for the six-year term, and there was no candidate in opposition. Manning's poll of twenty-four votes was due to the fact that the friends of J. B. Campbell, a rival candidate of Manning for the short term, were attempting to prejudice Perry's followers against Manning. The scheme succeeded on the first ballot for the short term, but was detected in time to elect Manning on the third ballot two days later.¹³

The press rejoiced that Perry would represent the state at Washington. The *Keowee Courier* expected him to exert "commanding influence" there. The *Columbia Phoenix* regarded his election with such unanimity as one of the best evidences of South Carolina's loyalty that could be given to the Administration, and as high tribute to his statesmanship.¹⁴

In his Messages to the legislature Perry had failed to recommend ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution proposed by Congress in February, which declared slavery abolished in the United States and its possessions and gave Congress power to enforce the article "by appropriate legislation." He seemed to think the matter of little consequence, since the South Carolina convention had already declared the abolition of slavery. In a letter to Seward on October 29 he wrote complacently of his Messages to the legislature and their response, assuring him that the people of South Carolina would prove themselves "as true & loyal to the Federal Government as any State north of Mason & Dixons line." To him the only ripples on the smooth-flowing surface of reconstruction were Negro troops and unscrupulous Treasury agents. He earnestly implored removal of the former, but requested that white Federal troops be retained in Charleston, Georgetown, and Beaufort, where the freedmen had been demoralized by the presence of colored garrisons.¹⁵

¹³ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 279-280; *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 41-42, 49, 53; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 31, November 2, 1865; *New York Tribune*, November 10, 1865; Perry to President Johnson, October 5, 1865, Johnson Papers.

¹⁴ *Keowee Courier*, October 28, 1865; William M. Shannon to Perry, November 5, 1865, Perry Paper; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 1, 1865.

¹⁵ Department of State Papers.

The Thirteenth Amendment had been ratified by twenty-three of the twenty-seven states required for adoption, but so far none of the original seven seceding states—except Louisiana, whose reconstruction had started under Lincoln—had acted upon it. On October 28 President Johnson telegraphed Perry:

I hope that your legislature will have no hesitancy in adopting the amendment to the Constitution of the United States abolishing slavery. It will set an example which will no doubt be followed by the other states & place South Carolina in a most favorable attitude before the nation. I trust in God that it will be done. The nation & state will then be left free and untrammelled to take that course which sound policy wisdom & humanity may suggest.

Evidently receiving no reply, Johnson telegraphed again three days later urging action upon the amendment and also repudiation of the war debt. "If the action of the Convention was in good faith why hesitate in making it a part of the Constitution of the United States?" he asked. "I trust in God that the restoration of the Union will not be defeated and all that has so far been well done thrown away."¹⁶

But Perry seemed unaware that refusal to meet these requirements promptly and uncomplainingly would furnish fresh fuel to the Radicals. Shrewd and tactful as he was, he failed to realize that he was under the will of the conqueror, and that the Radicals would hail opposition to ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment as evidence that the South was plotting to re-establish slavery. On November 4 he telegraphed Johnson that the war debt of South Carolina was "very considerable," most of the \$6,000,000 state debt having been incurred in constructing railroads and public buildings prior to the war; that South Carolina had abolished slavery in good faith, and never intended or wished to restore it; that the only objection to adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment was fear that Congress might, under the second section, claim the right to legislate for the Negro after slavery was abolished; and also

¹⁶ *Columbia Phoenix*, October 28, 1865; Johnson to Perry, October 28, 31, 1865, Perry Papers.

that the legislature had never received official notice of the proposed amendment.¹⁷

Seward then took the matter in hand and telegraphed Perry on November 6 that the President was not entirely satisfied with his explanation; that though the Constitution did not require official notice of amendments to be sent the states, he would immediately send it to those which were in insurrection when the others were notified. As to Perry's apprehension that the Federal Government might attempt legislation for the Negro, he answered:

The objection which you mention to last clause of the constitutional amendment is regarded as querulous & unreasonable because that clause is really restraining in its effects instead of enlarging the power of Congress. The Presdt. considers the acceptance of the amendment by S. C. as indispensable to a restoration of her relations with the other states of the Union.¹⁸

Perry immediately wired in reply: "I will send a Message to the legislature in the Morning. I think your explanation or construction of the second section of the constitutional amendment will be satisfactory & insure the adoption of the same."¹⁹ On the following day he gave to the legislature a résumé of his communications with the President and Seward, and stated that he was happy to find that the Secretary of State did not regard his objections to the amendment well founded. It was true that an honest, plain construction of the second section would simply give Congress power to enforce the first section. The President and Attorney-General of the United States, he understood, concurred in this view. But he suggested that the legislature, in adopting the amendment, place on record the construction given it by the Executive Department of the Federal Government. It was clear that the President considered ratification an essential condition for readmission to the Union; otherwise, the Southern states, at some future day,

¹⁷ Governor's Message No. 4, *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, p. 69; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 282.

¹⁸ November 6, 1865, Perry Papers.

¹⁹ November 6, 1865, Department of State Papers.

might change their constitutions and restore slavery. "You, gentlemen," he declared, "have, at this time, the destiny of the State in your hands, and I feel assured that you will act calmly and dispassionately with a view to the peace, happiness and well-being of South Carolina."²⁰

Perry told the legislature that he would communicate the formal notice of the amendment when it arrived, but Seward prodded him on with two telegrams, one stating that the President deemed early adoption by the South Carolina legislature "peculiarly important," and the other expressing the President's regret that South Carolina had neither repudiated her war debt nor ratified the amendment.²¹ On November 13 Perry transmitted the official notice of the amendment to the legislature and recommended ratification:

I know that it will give you the greatest pleasure imaginable to do all that you can, consistent with your honor and duty to the State, to restore her once more to self-government and civil liberty, to peace and harmony, and to happiness and prosperity, in the Union of States.

There can hardly be a doubt that this amendment will be adopted by three-fourths of the States, although you should refuse to accept it, and will become a part of the Federal Constitution. This consideration alone should lessen very much your responsibility in acceding to it, on the part of South Carolina, whilst it increases very much the evil and damage in rejecting it to the State.

On the same day both houses ratified the amendment, and after much argument added the following construction of the second section:

Resolved, That any attempt by Congress towards legislating upon the political status of former slaves, or their civil relations, would be contrary to the Constitution of the United States, as it now is, or as it would be altered by the proposed amendment, in conflict with the policy of the President declared in his Amnesty

²⁰ Governor's Message No. 4, South Carolina *House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 68-70; Columbia *Phoenix*, November 8, 1865.

²¹ November 9, 10, 1865, Perry Papers; New York *Tribune*, November 14, 1865.

Proclamation, and with the restoration of that harmony upon which depends the vital interests of the American Union.²²

The South Carolina press approved adoption of the amendment, considering it a mere matter of form, since the convention had already made abolition of slavery a part of the new state constitution. "The restoration of the Union . . . is the one great end to be attained," said the *Columbia Phoenix*, "and we are gratified that no unnecessary obstacle to its accomplishment has been placed in the way by the Legislature." But the Radical press accused South Carolina of utter lack of faith in adopting the amendment. The *New York Tribune* declared:

It is very plain that Governor Perry understands, and has caused his Legislature to understand, two things: *First*, that if his State Government, as at present organized, be competent to ratify an amendment to the Constitution, its claim to the admission of its representatives to Congress will be hard to dispute. *Second*, that the adoption of the amendment will not prove a bar to the reestablishment of Slavery, provided the State is left free to enact its own code for the government of the nominally emancipated blacks.

. . . He says, in fact, to the Legislature of South Carolina: "Pass the amendment, it will amount to nothing." For the code which he pronounces wise, just, and humane, is that infamous slave code—a code that does in fact annul the amendment, defy the Federal Government, and remit the negro to a Slavery scarcely less cruel, rigorous, and durable than that which we foolishly believed to have been destroyed.²³

Upon receipt of Perry's telegram announcing ratification of the amendment, Seward replied that the President was gratified but insisted that South Carolina lose no time in making "an effective organic declaration" disavowing all debts and obligations made in aid of the rebellion. He ordered Perry to

²² Governor's Message No. 5, *South Carolina House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 88-89; *ibid.*, pp. 89-96; *South Carolina Senate Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, pp. 73-77; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 16, 1865.

²³ *Camden Weekly Journal*, November 17, 1865; *Sumter Watchman*, November 22, 1865; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 9, 14, 1865; *New York Tribune*, November 21, 1865.

retain his office until relieved by express direction of the President.²⁴ Even in the face of this virtual command of the President, Perry stubbornly held his ground. He wired Seward on November 27:

Your telegram of the 20th inst. was not received in due time owing to my absence from Columbia. The Convention having been dissolved it is impracticable to enact any organic law in regard to the War debt. That debt is very small as the expenditures of South Carolina were reimbursed by the Confederate Govt. The debt is so mixed up with the ordinary expenses of the State that it cant be seperated. In South Carolina all were guilty of aiding the Rebellion & no one can complain of being taxed to pay the trifling debt incurred by his own account in perfect good faith. The Convention did all that the President advised to be done & I thought it wrong to keep a revolutionary body in existence & advised their immediate dissolution which was done. There is now no power in the Legislature to repudiate the debt if it were possible to separate it from the other debts of the State. Even then it would fall on widows & orphans whose estates were invested in it for safety.²⁵

The conventions in Mississippi and Alabama had promptly repudiated their war debts in August and September, and those in North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida had finally acquiesced under pressure of strong telegrams from Johnson.²⁶ Though the South Carolina convention had received no communication in regard to the debt while in session, it would have been wise on Perry's part to have reconvened it at the President's instance, for the Radicals were eager to charge with disloyalty the state that had led in secession. But Perry was convinced of the rectitude of his stand and was determined to protect what he considered the best interests of his people.

²⁴ November 20, 1865, Perry Papers.

²⁵ Department of State Papers. According to the Comptroller-General's report, the state debt was \$6,668,280.46, of which \$2,241,840.00 had been contracted since the war began. Most of the remainder had been incurred in endorsing railroad bonds and building the new State House (*Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina Passed at the Annual Session of 1865*, Columbia, 1866, pp. 7-11; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 21, 1865).

²⁶ Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 79-96.

II

The South Carolina legislature began its regular session on November 27. The following day Perry delivered his Message to both houses. He reported that he had sent a certified copy of ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Secretary of State. He had also communicated their resolution requesting postponement of sales of refugee lands in Beaufort District and had heard from Trescot that the sales were countermanded. He requested the legislature to set an early date for inauguration of the constitutional governor, as he had to sign commissions for the South Carolina congressmen, who were due to leave in two or three days. He announced that he had been instructed to retain the office of Provisional Governor until relieved by order of the President, but that after the governor-elect had qualified, he would make all communications to him instead of the legislature.²⁷

Though Orr suggested that the President be consulted before setting the inauguration day, Perry refused to do so for fear the Cabinet might advise postponement.²⁸ Accordingly, Orr was inaugurated at one thirty on November 29 in the College Chapel (used since destruction of the State House as the Hall of the House of Representatives). Perry first addressed the legislature in a farewell Message:

I have come here to-day to bid you farewell, as Provisional Governor of South Carolina, and to congratulate you on the restoration of the State, once more to self-government and independence, as a member of the Federal Union. Like the leader of God's chosen people of old, I have had the honor of conducting you through the wilderness, within sight of the promised land, but am not permitted to enter it. That great boon has been reserved for my distinguished friend, who is now about to be inaugurated as the first Chief Magistrate of the State ever elected by the sovereign people. . . .

I am sure, gentlemen, that I may say with perfect propriety, as

²⁷ Governor's Message No. 6, in *South Carolina House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 7-8.

²⁸ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 283.

the representative of the Federal Government in South Carolina, that the State has done enough to entitle her to be received back as a member of the Federal Union, with all of her Constitutional rights fully restored. . . .

He reviewed South Carolina's acts in compliance with the proclamation of the President, announcing that it was the first Southern state to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment and the first to prepare "a wise and humane" code of laws for the protection of freedmen. Since the people of the state had done their duty "gracefully and faithfully," he expressed his confidence that they would be relieved of military rule and that their representatives would once more be seated in the councils of the nation.

He gave an encouraging view of the future:

History teaches us that the present asperity of feeling which may exist in the breasts of many, in consequence of the wrongs and injuries of the war, will soon wear out. Brave and honorable men are always ready and willing to become reconciled. History teaches us, too, that the ravages of war are much more easily repaired than one is apt to suppose. An industrious and enterprising people will soon restore a country desolated by war. Such a people may soon convert a wilderness into productive and highly improved farms. No one need despair of the State. In a few years, with peace and industry, everything will change and wear a prosperous and happy aspect.

In conclusion he thanked the legislature for conferring on him "the high and distinguished trust" of representing South Carolina in the Senate of the United States and assured them that he would devote all his "energies and humble talents" to promoting the best interests of the state.²⁹

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 292-296; South Carolina *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 13-15; Columbia *Phoenix*, November 30, 1865. Perry's statement that South Carolina led the Southern states in ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment and preparation of a freedmen's code requires modification. Of the states whose reconstruction began under Johnson, South Carolina was the first to ratify, but the four "Lincoln states" had already ratified. Also, South Carolina was first to prepare a "Black Code," which had passed second reading when Perry spoke, but was not enacted into law until after Mississippi's (Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 97-99, 106-108; South Carolina *House Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, p. 85; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, Extra Session, 1865, p. 65).

Orr followed in an inaugural address which forecast a continuation of Perry's policy. He pledged earnest support of the President's reconstruction program and commended his fellow-citizens for their cheerful acquiescence. Like Perry, he urged the state to look to the future instead of the past—to diversify its industry, develop its water power, and bring in skilled labor from the North and Europe.³⁰

There seemed bright prospects for fulfilment of the hopes of these two progressive leaders of the up country. The *Keowee Courier* commended their messages as "statesmen-like documents" and urged the people to strive manfully to carry out their principles. The *Columbia Phoenix* wrote: "In taking leave of Governor B. F. Perry, we feel that we write the meed awarded to him by the whole people of the State, when we pronounce an emphatic 'well done.'"³¹

Perry telegraphed Johnson for permission to transfer his gubernatorial office to Orr, but was not released for several weeks thereafter. He was thus unable to join Manning, the other South Carolina senator, in Washington, as he had planned.³² Evidently Seward and the President were awaiting his recommendation, as representative of the Federal Government in South Carolina, for repudiation of the war debt. Seward wrote acknowledging receipt of Perry's dispatch of November 27, and stating that while Perry's objections to adoption of the measure were "of a serious nature," the President awaited with interest an official expression on the subject from the legislature.³³

On December 9, the day after receipt of Seward's message, Perry sent a letter to Orr summarizing his communications with the Secretary of State on the war debt question and requesting him to lay Seward's letter before the legislature. In his Message of December 11, Orr read Perry's communication,

³⁰ South Carolina *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 15-20; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 30, 1865.

³¹ *Keowee Courier*, December 9, 1865; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 30, 1865.

³² Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 284; John L. Manning to Perry, November 27, 1865, Perry Papers.

³³ November 30, 1865, Perry Papers.

which was immediately referred to the Committee on Federal Relations.³⁴ On the preceding day Perry had written a long letter to Seward informing him that the organization of the state government of South Carolina was now complete: the convention had reformed the state constitution and abolished slavery; the legislature had taken the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, adopted the Thirteenth Amendment, and passed second reading of a "wise, just & humane code of laws" for the freedmen; the governor had been inaugurated; members of Congress had been elected. "I may further say," he continued, "that the spirit of the people, throughout the State, is as loyal as that of any state in the Union. They are peaceable and quiet, & will, in good faith, submit to, & carry out, all the laws of the United States." He reminded Seward of his agreement to remove Federal troops as soon as the state government was organized, and asked him to withdraw them from all districts except Charleston, Beaufort, and Georgetown, where they were serviceable in keeping the freedmen quiet. There was no necessity for keeping them in the upper and middle country, where their presence only caused "serious petty annoyances" to the people. He also requested that the President immediately organize the United States courts in South Carolina to protect citizens against the arbitrary and fraudulent actions of the Treasury agents, who decided the rights of property by "their own interested despotic will" without proof or trial.³⁵

The legislature moved forward rapidly with the legislation recommended by Perry and Orr—passing acts relieving the financial distress of the state by amendment of the stay law and issuance of state treasury notes to be received in payment of all dues, including taxes; enacting the code recommended by Burt and Wardlaw into law; providing for popular election of presidential electors; reorganizing the militia; establishing

³⁴ *Columbia Phoenix*, December 13, 1865; Orr Message No. 2, in *South Carolina House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 82-84.

³⁵ December 10, 1865, Department of State Papers.

the University of South Carolina.³⁶ Settlement of the war debt question, however, was postponed. Both houses agreed to the report from the Senate Committee on Federal Relations which, while declaring its loyal sentiments and purposes toward the Government of the United States, stated that it could not distinguish what entries in the report of the Comptroller-General were war debts, and therefore could not make any definite recommendation on the subject. It asked that he make an itemized statement of the war debt to the next session and report what persons held the securities, in order that the Assembly might act advisedly. Meanwhile, it recommended that no provision be made for payment of interest on the portion of the state debt contracted during the war.³⁷

On the closing day of the legislative session, December 21, Seward sent a telegram to Perry relieving him of his duties as Provisional Governor. In the judgment of the President, he stated, the time had arrived when the conduct of affairs in South Carolina might be remitted to the constitutional authorities without endangering the peace and safety of the United States. "It gives me especial pleasure," he added, "to convey to you the President's acknowledgment of the fidelity the loyalty and the discretion which have marked your administration."³⁸

On Christmas Day Perry expressed his appreciation to Seward and notified him that the governor-elect had entered on his duties.³⁹ On the same day he wrote President Johnson:

I cannot, Mr. President, consistent with the feelings of my heart, take leave of you, as Provisional Governor without returning my most grateful thanks for all your kindness and indulgence to me, in the discharge of my official duties. The high honor you conferred on me, in my appointment as Provisional Governor, was un-

³⁶ South Carolina *Statutes At Large*, XIII, 245-357; South Carolina *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 70, 118, 119, 149, 151, 185-186; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, p. 121; Columbia *Phoenix*, December 24, 1865; Keowee *Courier*, December 23, 1865.

³⁷ South Carolina *Senate Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, pp. 121, 139; South Carolina *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1865, p. 170; *Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of South Carolina*, 1865, p. 168.

³⁸ Perry Papers; Columbia *Phoenix*, December 23, 1865.

³⁹ Department of State Papers.

solicited and unexpected. I entered on the duties of the office with great mistrust of my ability to discharge them, in a manner acceptable to you & the people of South Carolina. That I have done so, has been owing, in a great measure, to your wise, just & patriotic counsel, and the loyalty and confidence of my fellow citizens.

History will record that it is your immortal honor to have restored the dismembered & broken fragments of the American Republic without marring its civic beauties. On your accession to the high office which you have filled with so much wisdom virtue & patriotism, you found this magnificent Republic, torn to pieces by civil war and bleeding at every pore. You have restored peace & united once more all the States under our glorious old Star Spangled Banner.

Long may you live, Sir, to enjoy the grateful homage of a free and enlightened people. . . .⁴⁰

Perry's retirement called forth from various quarters echoes of the "Well done" pronounced on his administration by the *Columbia Phoenix*.⁴¹ Said the editor of the *Keowee Courier*:

We cannot take leave of Gov. Perry, in this connection, without a word of gratitude. Called upon to govern his native State, by her enemies, in a most trying period of history, he has served his State, his country, and his friends, with wisdom, zeal and ability. He has brought order out of confusion, and kept faith with all parties. His uprightness of character has made him a host of friends, at home and abroad. Long may he deserve them. Verily, he was the right man in the right place.⁴²

The verdict of his fellow-citizens was well deserved. Perry had shown himself a truly statesmanlike figure in executing his difficult task. He was one of the ablest and most liberal of the Provisional Governors—excelled by none in the confidence that he commanded among all classes in the state.⁴³ Sympathetic, shrewd, and energetic, he settled the complicated problems that were before him with wisdom and dispatch. His administration was one of the most progressive in the history of the state.

⁴⁰ Johnson Papers.

⁴¹ *Charleston Daily News*, December 22, 1865; Le Conte, *Autobiography*, p. 237.

⁴² January 6, 1866.

⁴³ See Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 39-96, for an account of other Provisional Governors.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

A Fight to Obstruct the Radicals

BY THE opening of Congress in December all the seceded states except Texas had fulfilled the President's requirements for readmission to the Union and had elected Senators and Representatives. But the Radicals had no intention of surrendering their control to the Democrats. By playing upon the "Black Codes" and atrocity stories of Radical journalists, they had spread distrust of the South throughout the North and prepared the way for their vindictive program. Under the leadership of Thaddeus Stevens, representatives from the reconstructed states were denied their seats until a Joint Committee on Reconstruction could determine their status. Thus Johnson's magnanimous policy was in one swoop rejected, and the work of the Provisional Governors overthrown.¹

When Perry was free to assume his duties as United States Senator, there was no hope of his being admitted. But he proceeded to Washington early in February to lay his accounts as Provisional Governor before the President and present his commission to Congress. When his credentials were proffered to the Senate by Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland, they were laid on the table with those of the other Southern senators.²

Perry published a strong letter in the *National Intelligencer*, vindicating the position of his state and appealing for

¹ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 705-711, 715-725; New York *Tribune*, November 17, 28, December 5, 1865.

² Autobiography, 1874, pp. 135, 148; Greenville *Enterprise*, quoted in Columbia *Phoenix*, February 11, 1866; Reverdy Johnson to Perry, March 10, 1866, Perry Papers.

justice and magnanimity on the part of the North. The people of South Carolina, he said, had been taught by their greatest statesmen that a sovereign state had the right peaceably to secede from the Federal Union. Though he had tried to disabuse them of the delusion, they saw in the election of Lincoln the triumph of a sectional majority determined to interfere with their domestic institutions. But the fortunes of battle had decided against them, and they had accepted the results of the war as the decree of God. They had abandoned the doctrine of secession forever, and acknowledged the Federal Union as perpetual. In obedience to the President's proclamation they had prepared themselves to resume, in good faith, their position once more in the Union.

As for the freedmen, their former owners had only a feeling of kindness and protection toward them. If the Northern people understood the character and disposition of the Negro, they would not concern themselves about him and his political rights. The freedman did not desire, nor was he capable of exercising, the right of suffrage in his present degraded and ignorant condition. If the Northern states felt as much interest in the Negro as they pretended, why did they not induce him to migrate North? Instead, many had prohibited his entrance under severe penalties, and all but six had denied him suffrage. Was it just and right on the part of states where the Negro had been free for a century and yet denied the right of voting to insist that he be allowed to vote in South Carolina, where he had just been emancipated?

Turning then to the exclusion of Southern members from Congress, Perry continued:

It is most remarkable that whilst two-thirds of the States are legislating on the credit and most vital interests of the Southern States, these States, composing one-third of the Republic in population and one-half in extent of territory, should be excluded from all participation in such legislation. It is not only contrary to Republican principles, but an outrage on the sense of justice in a despotism, for ten millions of people to be tried, condemned and deprived of their civil, political and constitutional rights without a



NO ACCOMMODATIONS

SOUTHERN CONGRESSMAN ELECT TO CLERK OF THE HOUSE: "I should like very much to secure my Old Seat. Governor Perry says I'm entitled to it."

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: "I am very sorry, Sir, but we can not accommodate you. All the Old Seats were broken up, and are now being thoroughly Reconstructed."

(From *Harper's Weekly*, IX [December 9, 1865], 781)

hearing. They have been in rebellion, it is true, and they have likewise been pardoned by Executive clemency and restored to their citizenship and loyalty.

It would seem that the object of the radical party in Congress, in offering so many amendments to the Constitution, and in insisting on the application of the test oath to members of Congress, was to perpetuate their power in the Government. Instead of having this effect, however, it will more than likely have just the opposite tendency. Their amendments will never be adopted by three-fourths of the States, and their continued exclusion of the Southern members must produce a reaction against them, when they go before the people again.

The Southern people have been peculiarly unfortunate. At one time they thought it better to withdraw their members from Congress, and live separately from the North. This they desired to do peaceably and quietly. The North objected, and declared that the Union should not be dissolved. They were repeatedly told that they must lay down their arms, elect their members of Congress, and resume their position in the Union. Finally they consented to do so. Now they are told that the Union is dissolved, and they shall not be allowed to resume their places in it! . . .

He ended with a plea for generosity:

The Southern States have committed grievous errors, and terrible has been their punishment, sufficient, one would suppose, to gratify the blackest hate of the most malignant revenger. . . .

. . . Now they humbly ask to be permitted to live quietly, peaceably and loyally in that Union, and renew their social, political and commercial relations with the North. It is to be hoped that the kind, generous and magnanimous policy adopted by the President will be pursued and carried out by the American people, and that we shall be, once more, free, united, happy and prosperous. . . .³

When Perry returned from Washington, he was hopeful that the Southern representatives would soon be admitted, be-

³ Reprinted from Washington *National Intelligencer* in Columbia *Phoenix*, February 25, 1866; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 191-203.

lieving that Johnson was "master of the position." Even after the Radicals had overridden the President's veto of the Civil Rights Bill, he held tenaciously to his faith in Johnson,⁴ as did public opinion throughout the state. Leading journals urged quiet compliance with the political situation and predicted ultimate Presidential triumph. "I think the President will not give ground," wrote Armistead Burt, "and that the country may witness some exciting scenes."⁵ Perry wrote to Johnson:

I have implicit confidence in the success of your wise & patriotic policy. It may not be however till after another election.

The Southern States must bide their time patiently, & I am sure they will do so most loyally. We are all quiet & hard at work. The "freed men & women" are behaving well & working well. . . . The only disturbance we have is from the Garrisons. . . .⁶

Other versions of Southern conditions, however, were the ones that got into print. Radical correspondents poured into the journals of the North tales of "rebel outrages" inflicted on the Negro—tales to bolster the demand for Federal military jurisdiction over the South.⁷ In mid-April Perry published a long letter in the New York *Tribune* to correct these "gross misrepresentations":

I state what I know to be the fact, that there is no feeling of unkindness on the part of the former slave-owners toward their freedmen. On the contrary, there is an earnest disposition, almost universal among them, to protect and assist their former slaves. This they would do more cheerfully and more effectually if the Freedmen's Bureau did not interpose and assume the guardianship of those freedmen.

As for granting civil rights to the Negro, he asserted that most of the Southern states had already passed legislation protecting him in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property—practically

⁴ Columbia *Phoenix*, February 25, 1866; Perry to A. Burt, April 20, 1866, Burt Papers (Duke University Library).

⁵ Sumter *Watchman*, January 10, 1866; Columbia *Phoenix*, February 9, 11, 24, 1866; Armistead Burt to Perry, April 19, 1866, Perry Papers.

⁶ April 20, 1866, Johnson Papers.

⁷ New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, January 23, March 27, 1866.

all that the Civil Rights Bill proposed except making him a citizen. Demand by the Radicals that he be granted the ballot, however, was unreasonable and preposterous. Why should Northern men insist on conferring on ignorant freedmen in the South an important political right denied intelligent Negroes in the North? Their injudicious voting would do little harm in the Northern states, where there were comparatively few Negroes; but in South Carolina, where a majority of the population was black, the government would pass into their hands.⁸

Greeley boldly flung the challenge of the Radicals when he responded:

. . . I cannot consent that half the people of your State shall be good enough to balance an equal number of White freemen in New York, but *not* good enough to cast a vote. It will not do, Governor! be assured of it. . . . You must let the Blacks vote or agree that they shall not count. . . .⁹

The Radicals, fearing that the Civil Rights Bill had transcended the powers of Congress, incorporated its essential provisions in the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which they pushed through Congress over the President's veto in June. Added to clauses conferring citizenship on the Negro were other more drastic provisions aimed at perpetuating Radical control in the South. Southern pre-war officials who had aided the Confederacy—composing the leaders of the South—were excluded from officeholding, and states not granting Negro suffrage were threatened with a proportionate reduction of representation in Congress.

Determined to reject the amendment at any cost, the South drew closer to Johnson in his heroic struggle for maintenance of constitutional government. It was to be a fight to the finish between the President and the Radicals, the issue of which would be determined by the fall congressional elections. Knowing that only by a merger of Democrats and conserva-

⁸ Letter of Perry, April 15, 1866, in New York *Daily Tribune*, May 3, 1866.

⁹ New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, May 4, 1866.

tive Republicans could victory be obtained, friends of the President organized the "National Union" party, hoping under that banner "to detach the wavering from the revengeful Radical ranks."¹⁰

Perry urged participation by South Carolina in the National Union Convention to meet in Philadelphia in August. Public meetings over the state endorsed the movement and elected delegates to the state convention, which assembled in Columbia on August 1. Here Perry was called to the chair, and Orr made permanent president. The meeting enthusiastically adopted a resolution approving Johnson's restoration policy and accepting the invitation for representation at Philadelphia. Perry was elected one of the delegates at large.¹¹

About two weeks later, with Orr and several other congenial friends, he set out for Philadelphia, stopping on the way to confer with the President. From Washington the cars were crowded to suffocation with delegates. Continuously the question was asked whether C. L. Vallandigham, the high-spirited "Copperhead" from Ohio who had been exiled because of his public speeches criticizing Lincoln, would be allowed to take his seat. Perry answered that if he were excluded, all the Southern delegates should be, since there was more propriety in rejecting a rebel than a mere rebel sympathizer.

On the evening after their arrival Orr was deputized by some of his Western friends to call on Vallandigham and urge him, for the sake of harmony, not to take his seat. Perry, at Orr's request, accompanied him, though expressing decided opposition to the mission. He considered it an outrage for such a proposition to be made by a Southern man. Vallandigham received them cordially, but announced his determination to fulfil the trust imposed in him by his constituents. Perry was impressed with his firmness and patriotism. When later Orr, failing to persuade the South Carolina delegation to vote

¹⁰ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 735-740; C. W. Geddes to Perry, July 10, 1866, Perry Papers.

¹¹ F. J. Moses to Perry, June 20, 1866, Perry Papers; James Farrow to *idem*, June 28, July 23, 1866, *ibid.*; Columbia *Phoenix*, July 18, 19, August 2, 1866.

to exclude him, proposed that they not vote at all, Perry vehemently refused, saying that it was "unmanly, impolitic and ungrateful" to pursue such a course towards a man who had made such sacrifices for the South, and that he would sooner see the convention break up and go to perdition.

On the opening morning of the convention the Massachusetts delegation—all Democrats and Southern sympathizers—called in a body to pay their respects to the South Carolina delegation and was warmly received. Together they proceeded to the huge wigwam which served as the convention hall, and marched arm in arm down the aisle, while the convention rose and cheered vociferously at this evidence of party harmony. That evening Perry, along with several other prominent delegates, addressed a gathering of fifteen hundred in the National Union club room. He dwelt on the benefits that would flow from an intermingling of sections and assured his hearers that South Carolina was now as loyal as Massachusetts, asking nothing except restoration as an equal state in the Union.

Cordiality prevailed throughout the sessions of the convention. Perry was on the committee that framed the address and resolutions, which heartily endorsed Johnson as the proponent of constitutional government. After many festivities, including an elegant dinner tendered the South Carolina delegation by the mayor of the city, Perry departed for home in high hopes that the long-desired reconciliation would soon be effected. But the harmonious merger melted away under the skilful maneuvering of the Radicals, who employed trickery, slander, and emolument of office to entice the moderate Republicans from the Democrats. Johnson's unfortunate "swing around the circle" played into their hands. The October election in Pennsylvania heralded Radical triumph in November.¹²

Meanwhile, state legislatures were meeting to consider ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, the harsh terms of

¹² Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 297-307; *Columbia Phoenix*, August 16-18, 1866; *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 135; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 740-749; Chas. W. Woodward to Perry, October 15, 1866, Perry Papers.

which the Radicals tried to make palatable by pretending that acceptance would assure readmission to the Union. But Perry voiced the determined opposition of most Southern leaders in a letter to the New York *Herald* refuting its charge that the old political and secession leaders in the South were the greatest obstacle to restoration. The Confederate states, said Perry, had pledged allegiance to the United States Government in good faith and carried out the suggestions of the President. Instead of accepting these hard terms as satisfactory, the Radicals were now proposing new ones "dishonorable and destructive to the South." In the first place, the amendment had not been submitted by two thirds of Congress as required by the Constitution, since eleven states were unrepresented at the time. That in itself was sufficient reason for its rejection. But, worse still, its terms were degrading. It conferred citizenship on all Negroes in the South without regard to fitness or moral character; it required the Southern states to grant them suffrage or give up equal representation in Congress; it demanded ostracism of all the leading men of the South—all who had ever held office.

How can you expect, sir, a brave and honorable people to voluntarily vote their own inferiority, dishonor and destruction? If we are to be disfranchised, dishonored, and have the seeds of our own destruction sown amongst us, it must be done by others, and not by ourselves. Let me assure you, sir, that the people of the South have honor and sagacity enough to reject with scorn and indignation this constitutional amendment, without being led by any one. . . .

He predicted that the amendment would never be adopted by three fourths of the states. Nor, if adopted, would it satisfy the "malignity and revenge" of the Radicals towards the South. Nothing would suffice except universal Negro suffrage and disfranchisement of all prominent Southern men who refused to assist in their nefarious program. Their object was to secure permanent control of the Government.¹³

¹³ Reprinted from New York *Herald* in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, January 31, 1867; Perry Scrap Book. A letter of J. Francis Fisher to Perry, October

A few weeks later Charles W. Woodward, a Philadelphia Democrat who had taken an active part in the recent election, wrote Perry of the misrepresentations of Southern feeling made by the Radicals in the campaign, and advised that the Southern states, for policy's sake, acquiesce in the amendment; otherwise, worse terms would be inflicted upon them.¹⁴

Perry replied in the *Columbia Phoenix* with an open letter repeating the substance of the arguments he had used in the *Herald*. As for Woodward's warning, he answered: "What security has the South that worse terms may not be imposed, if the amendment is adopted?" There was no guarantee that Congress might not hold the states as conquered provinces and convene "loyal" conventions to frame constitutions granting universal Negro suffrage and disfranchising leading whites. Even if worse terms followed, the South would have the consolation of knowing that it did not voluntarily adopt them, "and that amidst all the tyranny and oppression which may be heaped on us, we have maintained our honor unsullied, and never can lose our self-respect."¹⁵

The letter was warmly received throughout the country. The *Phoenix* reported: "It has been published from New York to New Orleans, in the leading papers of every city, and has been generally accompanied by very commendatory notices." The *Columbus (Georgia) Sun* expressed its gratification that the letter was appreciated throughout the South and treated with high respect even by Northern journals of opposing political sentiments. "We can recall nothing from all that has been written or spoken upon the acceptance by the South of the Constitutional Amendment, which will compare in point, clearness and force to this production of the pen of the ex-Provisional Governor of South Carolina."¹⁶

12, 1866, in reference to the letter, dates it sometime previous to October 3 (Perry Papers).

¹⁴ October 15, 1866, Perry Papers.

¹⁵ Perry to Woodward, October 26, 1866, in *Columbia Phoenix*, November 4, 1866.

¹⁶ Editorial, *Columbia Phoenix*, November 28, 1866; *Columbus Sun*, quoted in *ibid*.

In South Carolina the letter was universally commended. Samuel McGowan wrote to Perry:

It is perfect in argument & taste. . . . It appears too at the right time—It will bring *any thought* of such a disgrace in S. C. beyond the possibility of resurrection!

You are perfectly right, the Scoundrels are not in favor of its passage, and never expected it to be adopted. But they expect to make capital out of *our refusal*. But without regard to consequences, I say let perdition come first! . . .¹⁷

Six days later Orr delivered his message to the legislature, relieving the minds of those who had given credence to the rumor that he favored the amendment. "If the constitutional amendment is to be adopted," he said, "let it be done by the irresponsible power of numbers, and let us preserve our own self-respect, and the respect of our posterity, by refusing to be the mean instruments of our own shame." The House rejected the amendment by a vote of ninety-five to one, and the Senate without a record vote. By March twelve states had refused to ratify, and the amendment was defeated.

But the election on November 6 had sealed the doom of the South. The Radicals had gained control of both houses of Congress by more than a two-thirds majority. Presidential reconstruction was at an end; the South was at the mercy of the Vindictives. Perry wrote to President Johnson: "The elections in the Northern States have greatly disappointed me, & I feel dispirited." A month later Perry's son wrote from the legislature: "Gov. Orr seems despondent, and does not seem to think his tenure of office is very secure; he says he will go to New York, if we are territorialized."¹⁸

¹⁷ John L. Manning to Perry, November 26, 1866, Perry Papers; Perry to President Johnson, November 10, 1866, Johnson Papers; Samuel McGowan to Perry, November 21, 1866, Perry Papers.

¹⁸ Columbia *Phoenix*, November 28, 1866; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 62-63; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 748-749; Perry to President Johnson, November 10, 1866, Johnson Papers; W. H. Perry to Perry, December 15, 1866, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

II

In March, 1867, Congress passed a bill over the President's veto inaugurating its plan of reconstruction. The ten states still deemed unreconstructed were divided into five military districts to be ruled by generals of the Federal Army. Elections for state constitutional conventions were to be held in which Negroes were authorized to vote and whites who were disqualified under the proposed Fourteenth Amendment excluded. A state was to be readmitted when it had framed a constitution perpetuating such suffrage, when that constitution had been ratified by a majority of the qualified voters, and when the legislature elected under it had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. If a majority of the registered voters did not participate in the convention election, or if a majority of those participating voted against holding a convention, the state would remain under military rule.¹⁹

The people of the South preferred to continue under their existing state governments subject to military rule rather than reconstruct them on the basis of Negro suffrage and proscription of their leading citizens. But many advocated quiet submission as the wisest policy, fearing that opposition would only give Congress an excuse for inflicting harsher terms upon them.²⁰ In South Carolina the press unanimously favored compliance with the terms of the bill. The *Phoenix* and *Charleston News* argued that once the political status of the South was settled, capital and labor would seek investment there, and prosperity would follow. The *Camden Journal* shrewdly observed: "It behooves us in this State, to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."²¹

Prominent leaders in the state, such as Orr and Hampton, sought to thwart the plan of the Radicals by persuading the

¹⁹ Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 208-221.

²⁰ *Columbia Phoenix*, March 24, 28, 1867; Henry W. Ravenel *Journal*, March 12, 1867.

²¹ *Columbia Phoenix*, March 6, 8, 22, 23, 1867; *Charleston News*, March 12, 13, 15, 1867; *Charleston Courier*, June 19, July 27, 1867; *Charleston Mercury*, May 10, 14, 18, 1867; *Camden Journal*, April 11, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, April 11, 1867.

Negroes to vote with the conservative whites. They made earnest addresses to colored audiences describing the community of interests between the two races of the South and pledging co-operation in securing for the freedmen educational and civil rights. Though the Negroes responded heartily to these overtures, they were gradually weaned away by the Radicals.²²

From the first Perry opposed submission and urged a straight-out fight to obstruct the whole reconstruction process and remain under military rule. On April 18 he began a series of letters in the *Phoenix* which scathingly denounced the Acts and urged the people to defeat adoption by registering and voting against the convention—for it would not assemble unless a majority endorsed it. Two months later Benjamin H. Hill, of Georgia, started a succession of articles in the *Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel* eloquently advocating the same plan, except advising nonparticipation in the election as the best means of defeating the convention. Perry considered it more expedient for the conservatives to participate, since at the same time that they voted "No Convention" they could choose the best delegates possible as a safeguard if the convention party won. Hill was heartily endorsed by the Georgia press and by the conservative leaders of his state.²³

But Perry was far ahead of public sentiment in his state. As in 1860, he stood alone among South Carolina political leaders—partly, no doubt, because of the prestige of Hampton. In his first communication, entitled "No Convention," he urged:

Five or six months ago, South Carolina, with all the other

²² *Columbia Phoenix*, March 19, 23, April 14, 16, 30, May 2, 1867; *Camden Journal*, May 16, 23, 1867; *Charleston Mercury*, April 30, May 2, 3, 1867; Henry W. Ravenel *Journal*, March 23, May 24, 1867.

²³ Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 228, 236, 261-263; Flippin, *Herschel V. Johnson*, pp. 281-288; Pearce, *Benjamin H. Hill*, pp. 142-155; Henry W. Ravenel *Journal*, July 23, 1867; *Columbia Phoenix*, April 18, 1867. "E.T.B." reports an interview with Hill in December, 1867, in which the latter expressed admiration for Perry and said that he had been opposed to registering or in any way acknowledging the Reconstruction Acts, but acquiesced when Perry pressed the measure (*Charleston Correspondent*, "E.T.B.," *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, December 18, 1867).

Southern States, rejected, with scorn and indignation, the constitutional amendment, which proposed to exclude from office their leading men, and reduce their representation in Congress, unless they permitted universal negro suffrage. Now, it is proposed by the military bill not only to exclude this class of persons from office, but to disfranchise them and exclude them from voting in all elections, and at the same time to enfranchise their former slaves and give universal suffrage to the negro. Strange to say, that there are many persons in the Southern States whose high sense of honor would not let them adopt the constitutional amendment, who are now urging the people to voluntarily swallow the military bill, regardless of honor, principle or consistency. I am happy to know that they are secessionists and never were Union men.

He urged all who were not disfranchised to register and cast their votes for the wisest and most trustworthy men for the convention, at the same time endorsing on their tickets "No Convention."

But if the people should vote "no convention," what then? The honor and dignity of the States will, at least, not be thereby sacrificed by their citizens. We shall remain as we are, under a military rule, till there is a reaction at the North. It has already commenced in Connecticut, and will, sooner or later, sweep over the whole North-western and Middle States. Then we shall be restored to our right in the Union, with honor unsullied and the right of suffrage unchanged. . . .

The Negro, he said, should be allowed to vote when he had acquired sufficient intelligence to understand his political rights and property enough to impel him to exercise them justly, but it was wicked to put ballots into the hands of those who would be passive tools of their employers or "the mischievous agents of Black Republican emissaries."

In conclusion he earnestly pled:

There is not the remotest hope or probability of the Southern States being restored to the Union till after the next Presidential election. Why, then, shall we voluntarily degrade ourselves, and give up our dearest political rights for a delusion? If dishonor must come, do not embrace it. If we are to wear manacles, let

them be put on by our tyrants, not by ourselves. . . . We have lived already two years under military rule, in great poverty and distress, and have been cheered all the time by the consciousness that we are not a degraded, though a conquered people. We can continue to live in the same way two years longer, or, if need be, ten years, and feel a pride in knowing that we have maintained our honor, and made every effort possible to preserve our freedom and constitutional rights. A man who feels that he has dishonored himself, is lost; and so it is with a people.²⁴

In May Perry published three other letters urging his fellow-citizens to register and vote "No Convention." Since the Radicals had successfully propagated the idea that noncompliance with the Reconstruction Acts would result in confiscation of lands by Congress, he concentrated his efforts on dispelling this "fatal delusion." In his second letter he pointed out the "criminal folly" of enfranchising sixty thousand blacks and surrendering the political power of the state into their hands. Of what avail would forty thousand white votes be against them? Under the "vile lead of Black Republican emissaries," they would exercise their power to oppress and plunder the white race. They would easily be persuaded that it was right and proper to divide the lands of the state equally among its citizens. They would insist on serving on juries and holding office, riding with the whites in cars, eating with them at hotels, and sitting with them in church. Vehemently he continued:

And can it be that the pride of Carolina has sunk so low, and been so degraded, as to vote for all this voluntarily, for the purpose of getting back into that Union which her citizens professed to hate and despise so cordially a few years since? Are they willing to go to the polls and cast their vote for a convention, with this destiny staring them in the face, in order to save their lands from confiscation? No. They will be voting the ultimate confiscation of their lands and their political rights as surely as they are voting away their honor as men and Carolinians.

²⁴ *Columbia Phoenix*, April 18, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, April 25, 1867.

... Do your duty, and leave the consequences to God. Act like men and Carolinians. Declare, by voting against a convention that you will never voluntarily yield the right of self-government, or place yourselves under the control of your former slaves. Better—far better—to remain as you are, under the military rule of your conquerors, and await their returning sense of justice. . . .

... I wish to see the Union restored under the Constitution . . . but I will never degrade myself, or my state, or surrender my constitutional rights or Republican principles, to get back into the Union. I will live under a military government, no matter how absolute and despotic it may be, and bequeath it to my children, sooner than vote a negro government for South Carolina, which every man will do who votes for a convention.²⁵

By May the Radicals had made much progress in aligning the Negro with their political machine. A state convention of the Union Republican party was held in Charleston on May 7, where Negroes were represented along with whites, and a program for equal rights inaugurated. In a forceful letter on May 30 Perry warned his fellow-Carolinians that the “negro legislation, assisted by radical cunning,” at Charleston was a foretaste of what would follow if they adopted the “military bill.” He concluded:

In all that I have said, I know that I am in a large minority at this time, as I was in 1860 and that I have been censured and abused now, as I was then, for resisting and fighting to the last moment, what I believed to be the ruin and degradation of the State. Minorities, which are so frightful to some, have no terrors for me. I have lived in them all my life, and grown familiar with them. Indeed, I have a great respect and sincere regard for them in times of political excitement or panic. They have generally firmness and principle, which cannot always be said of majorities, however large they may be.²⁶

A month later he published another letter urging patient endurance until the Democrats could “sweep the Black Re-

²⁵ *Columbia Phoenix*, May 3, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, May 9, 1867.

²⁶ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 74-82; *Columbia Phoenix*, May 9, 30, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, June 6, 1867.

publican party out of existence" in November.²⁷ But in July, when the Second Supplemental Reconstruction Act was passed, giving the military commanders complete control over the civil government of the states, Southerners became despondent. The Radicals were now skilfully consolidating their party through the Union Leagues and winning the Negroes to their side by gross misrepresentations and glittering promises. The Union Republican convention in Columbia on July 25 sounded the death knell to hopes of South Carolina conservatives for Negro co-operation. Here the Radicals and their Negro allies formulated a platform for Negro equality and appointed a central committee to radicalize the state.²⁸

Two days afterwards Perry made a last effort to unite the conservatives behind his plan for saving the state. He thus laid the political situation before them:

The question will be for the people of the Southern States to decide, in the coming election, whether they prefer to remain as they are, or by calling a convention, adopting negro suffrage, and electing radicals, go back into the Union. What advantage to the South will it be to increase the Black Republican majority in Congress? . . . It is a sad and melancholy reflection on human nature, to see men who inaugurated the war, and were going to die in the last ditch, now seeking to go back into the Union, stripped of every principle and right which they vowed to defend, with Black Republican collars around their necks. How disgusting to see base, unprincipled white men seeking office and position by hypocritically pandering to the ignorant, criminal and ruinous prejudices and aspirations of the negro! I would greatly prefer seeing every office in the State filled by the honest, intelligent negroes, than by such unprincipled and shameless men.

. . . I have ever been the friend and protector of the negro through life. This my former slaves will vouch for me. My house-servants, eight or ten in number, have never left me, and are still living with me on the same terms they did whilst slaves. It is

²⁷ *Columbia Phoenix*, July 3, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, July 11, 1867.

²⁸ Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 222-227, 235-238, 250-255, 264; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 82-85; *Charleston Daily Courier*, July 27, 1867.

because I wish well to the negro, that I am unwilling to see him placed in a false position. He is unfit to exercise the right of suffrage, and will become the dupe and tool of base and designing men. A war of races will ensue, and the negro, being the weaker and less intelligent will be exterminated. . . .

Describing the radical demands made by the Negroes in the recent Columbia convention, he warned:

This will be accomplished in that convention which the white people are going to vote for—a convention to disfranchise themselves, confiscate their property, and place the State absolutely under the control of the negroes. Was there ever such folly and madness heard of before, in the civilized world? In sack cloth and ashes, they will have to repent of their stupidity and dishonor.

. . . Mr. Calhoun predicted, years ago, that if the negro was set free, the Northern people would insist on his right of suffrage, and if allowed, the negroes would seize the Government, and the white people would have to leave the State! He further said that the former owners would lose all influence over their freedmen, whose sympathies and partialities would be for Northern men and vile emissaries sent here to control them. I think it is pretty generally acknowledged, even now, that all control of the negro, in the coming election, is already gone from their former masters. General Hampton and his friends had just as well try to control a herd of wild buffaloes in the vast prairies of the West, as the negro vote of Columbia.²⁹

When this last letter appeared, the press of the state was still almost unanimous in advocating acquiescence in the terms of the Reconstruction Acts. The Sumter correspondent of the *Charleston Courier* wrote: "Among the leading minds of South Carolina, Mr. Perry seems to have stood almost alone in his 'no Convention' policy." The *Phoenix* had thus commented on his second letter:

We sincerely regret that Gov. Perry has felt it to be his duty, as a man prominent in the councils of this State for many years, to attempt to make this issue before the people . . . an issue which

²⁹ *Columbia Phoenix*, July 31, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, August 8, 1867.

. . . can only be productive of a useless and damaging discord, where perfect unity is desirable. . . .

It took on a tone of impatience when publishing his fifth communication, announcing that it did so only as a courtesy due Perry's position and former services to the state. But on receipt of his last letter, Editor Selby wrote to Perry: "I tell you candidly that I believe your views will prevail throughout the State, the action of this Convention assisting the matter very materially."³⁰

The Charleston *News* consistently opposed Perry's policy, though expressing respect for "his character and ability." The following appeared in August:

What would our leaders have? We mean such men as Mr. Herschel V. Johnson, Hill, Perry and others. Grant they are brave, and heroic, and patriotic; not afraid of the implied threats of harsher measures, of confiscation, and further civil or political disabilities. Do they desire to see the present agitation indefinitely prolonged, industry clogged, commerce checked, credit and confidence altogether destroyed?

At first the *Mercury* likewise took issue with Perry's letters, advocating a convention as the best means of shielding the Southern people from the "oppressive evils" of the Reconstruction Acts. But when the Supplementary Act of July was nearing passage, it came around to Perry's view and urged the people to defeat the convention by voting against it or not voting at all.³¹

As for the country newspapers, nearly every one in the state had come out for the convention before Perry's articles appeared. His first two made little impression.³² After publication of his third letter Perry reported: "All the newspapers of the state, every one, but the 'Pedee Banner,' at Kingstree, are

³⁰ Charleston *Courier*, July 27, 1867; Columbia *Phoenix*, April 18, May 4, 16, 30, July 3, 1867; Julian A. Selby to Perry, July 29 [1867], Perry Papers.

³¹ Charleston *Daily News*, April 24, May 18, 1867; *ibid.*, quoted in Columbia *Phoenix*, August 6, 1867; Charleston *Mercury*, May 18, June 25, July 3, 15, 1867.

³² J. B. Sitton to Perry, July 19, 1867, Perry Papers; Columbia *Phoenix*, May 9, 1867, quoting various journals; Keowee *Courier*, April 27, 1867; Camden *Journal*, May 16, 1867.

on the other side.”³³ Throughout the summer the newspapers generally followed the policy of printing his communications with dissenting comment. The Greenville *Southern Enterprise* did, however, call upon the public to weigh carefully the letters of “our distinguished townsman.”³⁴

But though Perry received little encouragement from the press, he was greatly heartened by the response of friends and admirers throughout the state. Thomas G. Clemson, Calhoun’s son-in-law in Pendleton, wrote in April:

I have just read your noble letter published in the Charleston Courier of the 19th inst. and can not refrain from writing to thank you for your effort to save us from the degradation into which we appear to be rapidly sinking.

Many think as you do, but few if any occupy a position that will insure a hearing. You alone, in my knowledge, can raise a warning voice, and direct the crowd & I hope that you will continue to make yourself heard so long as there is a hope left.

An old friend gave an encouraging report from the same locality in July: “The good & wholesome advice like gentle rain, is producing good everywhere . . . even old Pendleton, that was so bitter against you, in Nullification & Secession days, will now vote 2/3 for you, over any one else.”³⁵

A letter from a prominent Charleston lawyer early in May signified that Perry was strongly supported there despite the hostility of the press:

We are in a very anomalous position here. . . . The Conservative element is without an organ. I am inclined to think it is still very large here. . . .

It may be that my associations are with only such as I describe,

³³ Perry to F. Marion Nye, May 25, 1867, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.). Mrs. Perry refers to the paper as the *Kingstree Star* (Lizzie Perry to A. Burt, May 11, 1867, Burt Papers). Perry does likewise in a letter in the *Greenville Enterprise*, September 9, 1868.

³⁴ M. Etheredge to Perry, June 21, 1867, Perry Papers; W. F. B. Haynsworth to *idem*, August 22, 1867, *ibid.*; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, April 25, May 9, 23, June 6, July 4, August 1, 8, October 9, 1867.

³⁵ Thos. G. Clemson to Perry, April 21, 1867, Perry Papers; J. B. Sitton to *idem*, July 19, 1867, *ibid.*

but so it is, every man I meet, approves your views & admires your manliness and independence. . . .

. . . I do not exaggerate in saying the appearance of one of yr. letters is *the event* of the day. And the greeting of the morning often is "Have you seen Perry's letter?"³⁶

Cheering news from various districts in the state kept pouring in through the summer. A shrewd—if unlettered—citizen of Edgefield penned this message: "The press jennerrally seemes to think your corse will do no good but . . . the press are not the people. . . . I am of the opinion that a majority in this District . . . are in favor of your coarse." From Abbeville District thirty men, headed by Dr. George E. Robinson, sent a joint letter to Perry, heartily endorsing his views. An influential citizen of Society Hill wrote that he would have several hundred copies of one of the letters printed at his own expense for distribution.³⁷ In August Perry received a most gratifying letter from W. F. B. Haynsworth, a prominent lawyer of Sumter:

When your first communication was published, its tone & spirit met with my unqualified approval. But I was then almost alone in that opinion in this community. . . . I am glad that you have proved yourself too patriotic to give up your Country because it did not seem that you were appreciated by your Countrymen.

I am not only convinced myself of the wisdom of your counsels, but I am satisfied that your opinions have been making rapid progress among the people, and that an immense majority will be of your way of thinking. . . .³⁸

Especially encouraging were messages from women in the state. A typical one came from the black district of Colleton in May: "I believe I speak the feelings of at least every *woman* of So. Ca. when I say we heartily endorse your views . . . and may Heaven aid you in recalling the manhood of our State to

³⁶ William E. Martin to Perry, May 7, 1867, *ibid.*

³⁷ M. Etheredge to Perry, June 21, 1867, *ibid.*; George E. Robinson *et al.* to *idem*, July 16, 1867, *ibid.*; Wm. W. Finney to *idem*, May 16, 1867, *ibid.*

³⁸ August 22, 1867, Perry Papers.

a sense of what is due at least to their Race." Most comforting of all to Perry was the devotion of his wife, who wrote a mutual friend: "I am *proud* to think that *among* the *few Patriots* in So Ca in 1867 my husband is *one*; that *alone* even he is willing to stem the torrent; his is an *exalted position*, reminds me of David, who *dared* oppose *Goliath*."³⁹

Letters from South Carolinians scattered from New York to Texas show the wide publicity given Perry's articles by journals outside the state. Paul Hamilton Hayne wrote from Augusta: "Your papers have attracted the notice of all persons of intelligence in this part of the Country, & I have heard but *one* opinion of their merit." J. J. Pope, Perry's old friend in the South Carolina legislature, sent his hearty congratulations from Savannah. After reading one of the letters in a St. Louis paper, a former citizen wrote: "I can again lift up my head, thank God! and with a proud smile, acknowledge that I am a Carolinian." Another, living in Texas, sent word that he and all the ex-Carolinians there endorsed Perry's position. A friend from Pendleton wrote: "Nearly every letter I receive from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi & Texas, all speak of your letters as having a wonderful effect in opening the eyes of the people. . . ."⁴⁰

By the middle of August a reaction was at last taking place in Columbia. F. W. McMaster, a prominent lawyer, wrote to congratulate Perry on the good work he was doing and to urge him "to hammer away now for the iron is hot & getting hotter." Hampton, he announced, would publish a letter in the *Courier* or *Mercury* the following day endorsing his position. But expression of opinion was still muzzled in the capital. Robert W. Barnwell, now president of the University, wrote to Perry:

I have not seen you to thank you for your manly efforts to sustain the honour of the State. . . . But poverty & despair overwhelm us.

³⁹ Mrs. Robert Chisolm to Perry, May 18, 1867, *ibid.*; Lizzie Perry to A. Burt, May 11, 1867, Burt Papers.

⁴⁰ Paul H. Hayne to Perry, June 11, 1867, Perry Papers; J. J. Pope to *idem*, May 31, 1867, *ibid.*; anonymous letter to *idem*, May 27, 1867, *ibid.*; George Butler to *idem*, June 24, 1867, *ibid.*; J. B. Sitton to *idem*, July 19, 1867, *ibid.*

Remember that connected as I am with this University I speak to you all alone. We I fear shall go down in the storm. . . .

One of the professors explained on August 20 that Hampton's letter had not appeared because those into whose hands it had fallen were "skittish" about publishing it. On August 28 it finally came out in the *Phoenix*, announcing that after "most anxious consideration" he had concluded it preferable for the state to remain under military rule rather than accept the ignominious terms offered by the Radicals. Along with Perry, he advised: "Let every man register, and cast his vote against the convention."⁴¹

When registration returns in October showed heavy Negro majorities throughout the state, the conservatives made a last-minute rally. A public meeting in Columbia on October 21 issued a call for a state convention and invited all the districts to send delegates to "act harmoniously in behalf of the interests of the white citizens of South Carolina."⁴² When the "Conservative Convention" assembled on November 6, twenty districts were represented. James Chesnut was elected president, and Perry one of the vice-presidents, along with Wade Hampton, A. P. Aldrich, J. A. Inglis, and four others. The only action taken was unanimous adoption of an address to the people of the state in vigorous protest against enforcement of the Reconstruction Acts. A resolution to vote for delegates to the state convention was laid on the table. The address pronounced the emancipation policy of the Federal Government the fountainhead from which had sprung "the thousand evils" surrounding Southern society. It declared the Reconstruction Acts destructive not only to their constitutional rights, but to their social peace. It expressed their willingness to confer upon the Negro every civil right, but protested against investing him with political rights:

Not for ourselves only, but on behalf of the Anglo-Saxon race and

⁴¹ F. W. McMaster to *idem*, August 14, 1867, *ibid.*; R. W. Barnwell to *idem*, August 15, 1867, *ibid.*; E. P. Alexander to *idem*, August 20, 1867, *ibid.*; Columbia *Phoenix*, August 28, 1867.

⁴² Columbia *Phoenix*, October 31, 1867.

blood in this country, do we protest against this subversion of the great social law, whereby an ignorant and depraved race is placed in power and influence above the virtuous, the educated and the refined. . . .

What do these Reconstruction Acts propose? Not negro *equality*, merely, but negro *supremacy*. . . .

The people of the South are powerless to avert the impending ruin. We have been overborne; and the responsibility to posterity and to the world has been passed into other hands.⁴³

At the election on November 19 and 20, most of the conservative whites absented themselves from the polls "under silent protest," hoping that enough Negroes would likewise stay away to form a majority of the electorate and thus defeat the convention call. But the blacks, rounded up by the Radicals, flocked to the polls and voted "For a Convention"—66,418 out of an enrollment of 80,550 participating. Only 4,628 whites out of 46,882 who had registered voted—2,278 "Against a Convention" and 2,350 for it. Since final returns showed that votes were cast by a majority of those registered, the convention call was assured. Nearly all the delegates elected were Radicals, and 76 out of 124 were Negroes. The proud Palmetto State was in the hands of its former slaves.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Ibid.*, November 7, 8, 1867.

⁴⁴ Henry W. Ravenel Journal, November 19-21, 1867; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 87-91; *Columbia Phoenix*, November 20-22, 24, December 3, 10, 1867; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, December 18, 1867.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Prostration

THE SOUTH, in its helplessness, now turned to the Democratic party of the North as its only hope for redemption. In reply to an invitation from the Committee of Arrangements for the Jackson Day banquet in Washington, Perry wrote:

The Southern heart, crushed and broken by terrific calamities, social and political, appeals at this time to every generous and manly feeling of the North. Never before in the history of a Christian and civilized people have such infamy and ruin, wide spread and universal, been inflicted on a whole section of the country, without distinction between the guilty and the innocent. It is well known that a large portion of the Southern people were opposed to the secession of the States from the Federal Union, and did all they could do for years to prevent the happening of so dire a calamity to the republic. They have suffered the destruction of their property, the loss of their homes, and the death of their sons and husbands; and now, as a reward for their life's devotion to the Union, they are doomed to negro supremacy and the barbaric rule of their former slaves. . . .

The Southern people are powerless and helpless at this time, and their only hope is in a returning sense of justice, on the part of their Northern and Western brethren. They expect nothing, and hope for nothing from the present Congress. . . .¹

The constitutional convention for South Carolina assembled in Charleston on January 14. Two thirds of the seventy-

¹ Perry to J. D. Hoover, Chairman, January 3, 1868, in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, January 22, 1868.

six colored members were ex-slaves; and twenty-seven of the forty-eight whites, Southern renegades. The leading spirits of the convention, however, were Northern adventurers of both races—men of education and intelligence, mostly there for personal gain. Though they drew up a constitution containing lasting democratic reforms, many of their innovations were ruinous, since they were unfamiliar with the problems of the state and unrestrained by property interests. Forty-six of the white delegates paid a total of only \$252.76 in taxes—less than \$6 each; and seventy-three of the colored paid \$32.35—less than fifty cents each. Completely irresponsible, they adopted a budget of \$2,230,950 instead of the pre-war \$350,000, levied heavy property taxes, and set no limit to the amount of debt the legislature might contract. Their most radical innovation was universal manhood suffrage. The constitution also provided for universal education and apportionment of representation in the lower house by whole population.²

In February Perry published a letter in the Charleston *Mercury* urging the conservatives of the state to awake from their apathy and organize a Democratic party to defeat ratification of the “negro-Yankee” constitution. Scathingly he wrote:

What a commentary on Republican institutions is that unlawful and usurped assembly now sitting in your Club House, forming a constitution for the once proud, glorious and honored State of South Carolina. Composed, as it is, of negroes, unprincipled and ignorant white men, traitors to their race and country, outcasts of Northern society, and adventurers, black and white Yankees, with a constitution written by some ignorant Northern Abolitionist, and sent here for adoption.

If under these circumstances the people of this State will not exert themselves, in concert with the National Democracy and the President of the United States, to prevent this vile and putrid patchwork of a government being saddled on them and their posterity then they deserve their fate, and are worthy of being the

² Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 90-105; Columbia *Phoenix*, January 16-March 19, 1868.

slaves of negroes and the outcasts of Northern society. But never, never can I believe such a calumny and slander. . . .³

During the ensuing weeks he received letters from leading citizens in different sections of the state endorsing his views, notifying him of the formation of Democratic clubs, and requesting him to address public meetings or assist in drawing up platforms.⁴ On March 24 he made "a speech of great force" to a Greenville meeting, which organized a Democratic club pledging its members to support the national Democratic party and vote against ratification of the "bogus constitution."⁵

On April 2 a Democratic state convention met in Columbia, with delegates present from twenty districts. It adopted resolutions submitted by Perry to send delegates to the national convention in New York on July 4, to urge the people to go to the polls and vote against the constitution, and to organize Democratic clubs in every district, town, and hamlet in the state. A resolution promising the freedmen full and equal protection in person and property and qualified suffrage when the Democrats came into power was also adopted. Perry championed it on the floor, along with John P. Thomas, D. Wyatt Aiken, and James Chesnut, maintaining that Negroes would be encouraged thereby to acquire intelligence and property, and that it was "the safety-valve of society in South Carolina." The convention nominated a congressional ticket and a state ticket headed by W. D. Porter, of Charleston, for governor, chose a state Central Executive Committee, and elected delegates to the national convention. Perry, along with James Chesnut, was chosen to represent the state at large.⁶

³ "Letter of Governor Perry," February 9, 1867, reprinted from *Charleston Mercury* in *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, February 26, 1868; *Columbia Phoenix*, February 28, 1868.

⁴ Benjamin H. Wilson to Perry, February 21, 1868, Perry Papers; J. B. Sitton to *idem*, February 22, 1868, *ibid.*; Benjamin Rhett to *idem*, February 27, 1868, *ibid.*; "G.D.S." to *idem*, March 1, 1868, *ibid.*; James A. Hoyt to *idem*, March 3, 1868, *ibid.*; T. B. Fraser to *idem*, March 5, 1868, *ibid.*; Edwd. Wm. Davis to *idem*, March 12, 1868, *ibid.*

⁵ *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, March 25, April 1, 1868.

⁶ *Ibid.*, April 8, 1868; J. P. Thomas in *Columbia Daily Record*, February 17, 1888, reprinted in *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, p. 4.

The constitutional convention had ordered the general election to be held in South Carolina on April 14-16. In March it assembled with a few other delegates as a Republican party convention and nominated candidates, giving practically all the nominations to its own members. Thereafter the Radical machine with its customary efficiency enlisted the support of the Negroes.⁷

On election day the *Southern Enterprise* contained a derogatory analysis by Perry of "The Yankee Negro Constitution." First, justices of the peace were given jurisdiction of all offenses less than felony, and of those in which punishment did not exceed a fine of \$100 or imprisonment for thirty days. This was a gross invasion of the right of trial by jury. Anglo-Saxon liberty was further endangered by the right of the legislature to subject anyone to martial law and maintain a standing army in time of peace. The sole object was suppression of the white race with Negro troops. He also remonstrated against the convention's repudiation of the Confederate War debt. Why should the "non-property holding negroes, yankees and Southern renegades" prohibit the property holders from paying those debts and preserving untarnished the honor of their state?

Especially did he condemn the extravagant projects that would throw such a heavy burden of taxation on the state: the free public-school system; juvenile reform schools; county poor houses; and the Board of Land Commissioners, which was empowered to purchase lands and resell them on credit to purchasers who would never pay.

Did any one ever before hear of so many effective provisions for squandering public money, when the whole State, and all the people in it, are reduced to bankruptcy and poverty? Well may those, who have nothing and pay no taxes, provide for these vast expenditures of public funds, after appropriating to themselves eleven dollars per day and mileage, and dividing out all the offices of the State.

⁷ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, March 11, 18, 25, April 8, 1868.

Worst of all, he continued, the constitution enfranchised every male Negro over twenty-one, "whether a convict, felon or a pauper," and disfranchised every white man who had held office in South Carolina. "The superior race is to be made subservient to the inferior. Taxation and representation are no longer to be united. . . . The property holders have to pay these taxes, without having any voice in levying them!"

Moreover, all the public schools, colleges, and universities in the state were to be free and open to all children without regard to race or color. There seemed to be a studied design throughout the constitution "to degrade the white race and elevate the black race, to force upon us social as well as political equality and bring about an amalgamation of races."

But if the constitution were all "that virtue, intelligence and patriotism could desire," no sensible and honorable man could vote for it because of its "usurped and polluted source." It had been adopted by "renegade Southern whites, yankee adventurers and negroes," and must remain forever a badge of South Carolina's dishonor and degradation.⁸

The election resulted again in an overwhelming victory for the Radicals. The constitution was ratified by a vote of 70,758 to 27,228, and the entire Republican state and congressional ticket elected. The Democrats won only 6 of the 31 seats in the South Carolina Senate and 14 of the 124 in the House, and carried only Horry and 9 of the up-country districts. Greenville supported the Radical ticket, ratifying the constitution by a vote of 1,607 to 774.⁹ The Radicals had been eminently successful in playing upon the credulity of the ignorant white mountaineers in the district—old Union men whom they persuaded to join the Union League in the belief that it was a Union party and would prevent confiscation of their lands.¹⁰

As directed by the state Democratic convention, the Cen-

⁸ April 15, 1868.

⁹ *Ibid.*, April 22, 29, 1868; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, p. 109.

¹⁰ Speech of Perry at Glassy Mountain, August 24, 1876, in *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, August 30, 1876.

tral Executive Committee of the party—composed of Wade Hampton, John P. Thomas, J. D. Pope, F. W. McMaster, Samuel McGowan, and W. M. Shannon—presented to Congress a formal protest against imposition upon South Carolina of the Radical constitution. Along with their memorial they sent an analysis of the constitution by Perry and expressed the hope that the views of “a life-long bold and outspoken Unionist” might dispel the idea held by many members that any paper emanating from South Carolina was pervaded with disunion.¹¹

But the Radical Congress was in no mood for concessions. On March 11 it had passed another Reconstruction Act providing that the new constitutions would go into effect when ratified by a majority of those voting—thus precluding their being rejected, as in Alabama in February, where a majority of those registered had stayed away from the polls. The other elections, therefore—except in Mississippi, where the rigorous disfranchising provisions of the constitution aided the conservatives in polling a majority against it—resulted in ratification. In Georgia Benjamin H. Hill conducted a vigorous campaign against the constitution, but Joseph E. Brown scored a triumph for the Radicals. On June 25 Congress passed an Omnibus Bill accepting the constitutions in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, and Alabama, and declaring the states entitled to representation in Congress as soon as their legislatures ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. By the end of July all but four of the seceding states had fulfilled the terms and been readmitted.¹²

Insatiate for power, Congress had meanwhile been attempting to secure control of the executive as well as legislative branch of the government by instituting impeachment proceedings against the President. Though the charges were untenable, Johnson escaped conviction by the narrow margin

¹¹ Letter of J. P. Thomas in *Columbia Daily Record*, February 28, 1888, reprinted in *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, p. 6; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, May 13, 1868.

¹² Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 280, 299-300, 310-329; Pearce, *Benjamin H. Hill*, pp. 165-171.

of only one vote when the Senate, after a trial of over two months, balloted on May 26.¹³ It was the first obstruction to the program of the Radicals. Perry wrote immediately to Johnson:

I cannot forego the pleasure of congratulating you & the country on the result of the infamous proceedings before the Senate of the United States. Seven Radical Senators have been found, not altogether wanting in a sense of justice, or entirely regardless of national honor. The number is not quite as large as that which was to have saved a city of old, but it proved to be large enough to save the Republic.

The news reached here last night and filled our little community with great joy & hopes as to the future as it will two thirds of the people of the United States. I hope & trust the Democratic party will, now, concentrate on you, as their candidate for the Presidency at the ensuing election. . . .¹⁴

June 2 had been set by the South Carolina convention for the election of county officers. During May public meetings, addressed by Perry, G. F. Townes, and others, were held in various sections of Greenville County to form Democratic clubs. On election day the voters went to the polls and reversed the result of the April election. Instead of a Radical majority of 823, returns showed a Democratic majority of 164 for the county. A reaction had taken place throughout the state; sixteen of the thirty-one counties went Democratic.¹⁵

But not all the South Carolina Democracy was in favor of the progressive stand on Negro suffrage taken by the delegates to the April convention. On the invitation of Edgefield citizens, another Democratic state convention assembled on June 8. It adopted the resolution of M. W. Gary holding in abeyance all questions relating to suffrage, and a resolution declaring the Government of the United States a white man's government. A committee was appointed to confer with the

¹³ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 761-783.

¹⁴ May 20, 1868, Johnson Papers.

¹⁵ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, May 6, 20, June 3, 10, 1868; Columbia *Phoenix*, June 9, 23, 1868.

Executive Committee elected in April. The latter body came to the hall and magnanimously invited the convention to elect members to fill out the delegation to the New York convention and to elect an Executive Committee to confer and eventually consolidate with them. Hampton, as chairman of the April Committee, was invited to address the convention and cordially endorsed its action. Thus the Democracy unwisely retreated from its forward step of April.¹⁶

The South Carolina delegation, consisting of Perry, A. P. Aldrich, and W. S. Mullins, elected by the April convention, and Wade Hampton, J. B. Campbell, and M. W. Gary, elected in June, set out for the New York convention. Perry, with his daughter, Fannie, and one of her friends, visited Washington a few days on the way. Here he went to call on the President, but did not have an opportunity of speaking on the subject of the nomination. He also called on Chief Justice Chase, strongly endorsed for the Presidency by the New York Democracy. Perry was impressed with his talents and ability, but could not brook his Radical politics. While in Washington he also conversed with General Winfield S. Hancock, popular with the Southern as well as the Northern Democracy because of his "wise, just and liberal" administration of the reconstruction government in Louisiana and Texas. "He has all the frankness of a soldier, with the polish and cordiality of a well-bred gentleman," Perry wrote.¹⁷

In New York Perry and the two young ladies stayed at the home of his friend John Livingston, where they enjoyed luxurious hospitality. The convention moved off in a spirit of harmony, every state and territory being represented and the Southern delegates receiving equal recognition with the Northern. When balloting for the presidential nomination began, most of the Southerners cast several ballots for Andrew Johnson and then for Hancock. When the convention swung suddenly to Horatio Seymour, Governor of New York, the

¹⁶ *Columbia Phoenix*, June 10, 1868.

¹⁷ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 48-52, 380-381; *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 136.

South united with the North in making the nomination unanimous.¹⁸

That evening Hampton, Perry, and other Southern delegates addressed a large crowd assembled at a ratification meeting in front of the Democratic clubroom at Union Square. Hampton made an eloquent plea for deliverance of the South, expressing its great confidence in the Democratic party. Perry gave assurance that the nominations would be confirmed by every Southern state, and forecast Democratic victory in November if the Democracy of the North, Northwest, and East would rally to the support of the South.¹⁹

On his way home, Perry stopped overnight at Mt. Vernon as the guest of his friend Miss Pamela Cunningham, now regent of the Mt. Vernon Association. It was his first visit to the home of the Father of his Country, and he spent a delightful day wandering over the grounds and reflecting on the life and character of Washington and the great men who had visited him there. "But the late war, and the present condition of the country, obtruded into my reflections and made everything sad," he wrote.²⁰

The Radical government had meanwhile been put into full operation in South Carolina. The motley legislature, consisting of eighty-eight Negroes and sixty-seven whites, assembled on July 6 in special session in Janney's Hall in Columbia and proceeded to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and elect two United States senators. The South Carolina delegation was thereupon admitted to Congress, and General Canby remitted the state government to the civil authorities. On July 8 General Robert K. Scott of Ohio, assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau of South Carolina since 1866, was inaugurated Governor. He had neither the courage nor ability to control the unscrupulous men around him, and his administration of four years was to prove a disgrace to the state. The

¹⁸ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 51-52, 381-383; *Columbia Phoenix*, July 7-10, 1868.

¹⁹ *Columbia Phoenix*, July 14, 1868.

²⁰ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), p. 383; *Autobiography*, 1874, p. 136.

most capable carpetbagger in the new administration was the Attorney-General, Daniel H. Chamberlain, of Massachusetts, who had been educated at Amherst, Yale, and Harvard—a polished orator, calm and temperate in manner and cultivated in taste. The Secretary of State, Francis Louis Cardozo, was the most prominent Negro—a free-born mulatto of Charleston who had been graduated with distinction from the University of Glasgow.²¹

From the first, open bribery, fraud, and wild extravagance prevailed in the legislature. It was universally charged with corruption. Perry voiced the general feeling of indignation in a letter to the *Phoenix* in September:

Mr. Editor: It is high time that the press of South Carolina, and the public speakers of the State, had turned their attention from the usurpations, tyranny and corruption of the radical Congress, to the wild, extravagant, and atrocious legislation of that “unlawful assembly,” composed of carpet-baggers, negroes and scoundwags, now sitting in Columbia, and styling themselves “the General Assembly of South Carolina.”

This heterogenous and motley group of would be legislators, really seem disposed to bankrupt the State, and drive the people to acts of violence, or goad them on to revolution. Never before, in the history of civilized legislation, was there a spectacle so revolting and disgusting, as we now have in South Carolina. A greedy swarm of unprincipled adventurers from the North, without fortune and without character—many of them escaped convicts from jails and penitentiaries—have come here, under the protection of Federal bayonets, and by pandering to the ignorance, prejudice and bad passions of our former slaves, have had themselves elected to the Legislature, so called, and are filling all the high offices of the State.

. . . Their sole purpose is to get money, and to get office, and to protect themselves against the possible and desecrated vengeance of an outraged and oppressed people. . . .

Impoverished and ruined as the people of South Carolina are, this bogus Legislature have not only increased salaries of all the

²¹ Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 259; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 109-120, 148-155; *Columbia Phoenix*, July 10, 1868.

State officers one third, but have created a multitude of offices, before unknown and wholly unnecessary, with extravagant salaries and perquisites, for the express purpose of providing for their hungry and worthless positions here and at the North. . . .

The expenses of the state, he said, would be \$4,000,000. The impoverished people could not pay that enormous sum—it was ten times the taxation required in their days of wealth and prosperity! Not satisfied with these expenditures, “this mongrel, stupid and unprincipled bogus Legislature” had issued bonds amounting to several millions of dollars. The people of South Carolina should prepare to meet these wrongs ere they were crushed to the earth.²²

The conservatives of South Carolina were now strongly organizing for action. Their only hope of defeating the Radicals at the polls in November lay in winning the colored vote. It would be a difficult task, for Radical emissaries were becoming more and more incendiary, and the Negroes had been riotous and overbearing since withdrawal of the military authority.²³ Replying in the *Phoenix* to an invitation from the people of Columbia to speak at the Democratic ratification meeting on July 28, Perry thus adjured the South Carolina Democrats:

All should be active in the canvass, and leave no stone unturned which may contribute to success. . . . Have able, active, energetic and bold men nominated in every section of the State . . . to address the people and stir them up to a sense of the impending danger. In doing so, they should appeal to the colored people of the State, and show them that their true interests are identified with that of the white race, and that they should no longer place themselves as political slaves under the lead of unprincipled carpet baggers and Southern renegades, who are using them only as tools for their own selfish aggrandizement. They should also be told, that whilst they continue to act with those bad men, in oppressing and disfranchising the Democrats, they will not be employed or favored by the Democracy of South Carolina. The scallawags and radicals

²² Letter of Perry, September 25, 1868, Columbia *Phoenix*, September 30, 1868; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, October 7, 1868.

²³ Henry W. Ravenel Journal, August 21, 25, 1868.

cannot employ them or assist them, and they should be taught to know who their true friends are. . . .²⁴

On August 3 the Greenville Democratic club held one of the largest meetings in its history to hear a report of the Democratic national convention and ratify the nominations for President and Vice-President. After Perry had entertained them for more than an hour, they adopted resolutions endorsing the nominees and inviting the Democratic clubs of Greenville and adjacent districts to a grand rally on the evening of August 13. At the appointed time a torchlight procession formed at the campus of the Female College and proceeded to the speaker's stand in front of the old courthouse. In the line were many amusing transparencies: a Negro with a spy glass looking into the moon, with the words "Forty Acres of Land" beneath; General Grant, Republican nominee for President, smoking a cigar disconsolately and sitting on an upturned horse; a carpetbagger arriving with a thin carpetbag and departing with baggage in profusion. Music from the Greenville band added spirit to the occasion. Wade Hampton first addressed the meeting in a stirring plea for support of the Democratic party—the only party that would bring peace to the South. He made a few earnest remarks to the colored people:

The interests of the white and colored races are the same. Should the white man make a good crop the wages of the colored man will be increased. If the crops fail the laborer has nothing. We are willing to give the colored people all necessary rights for the protection of person and property. My colored friends! if you want to see this State prosperous you must work. The Radicals don't want you if you have no money. I have heard of forty acres of land, but have never seen it. A piece of earth six feet long and three feet wide is all they will ever give you. . . .

J. P. Thomas, Armistead Burt, and Samuel McGowan followed in forceful speeches, and Perry ended in a short address

²⁴ *Columbia Phoenix*, July 29, 1868; *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, August 12, 1868.

describing the oppressions of the Radicals and predicting their overthrow in November. He tried especially to dispel the delusions of the freedmen and convince them that their true interests were with the Democrats.²⁵

To offset these overtures, the Union Leagues held a grand rally near Greenville two days later, where B. F. Whittemore, a cunning demagogue from Massachusetts, made remarks of a "very inflammatory" nature to the Negroes.²⁶

During the following months Perry was constantly called upon to address Democratic rallies in Greenville and near-by counties. He attended when possible and, if professional engagements prevented, sent a letter to be read at the meeting. To a committee from Anderson he wrote in the same vein as he had written to Columbia, urging the strategic importance of securing the Negro vote.²⁷ He repeated his admonition in a letter to a mass meeting at Abbeville. "This Presidential election at the North is a question of liberty or despotism," he wrote. "But at the South, my friends, it is a question of *life* or *death*! If the Radicals succeed, a war of races in the South ensues inevitably."²⁸ On August 27 he addressed a great Democratic meeting and picnic at George's Creek in Pickens County. On September 15, along with Hampton, he spoke to a throng of three thousand at Walhalla. In October he spoke to Democratic mass meetings at Walker's Cross Roads, nine miles east of Greenville; at Old Pendleton; at Calhoun in Anderson County; and at Colonel McCullough's—one of the largest and most interesting meetings in the up country, attended by citizens of Greenville, Anderson, and Laurens counties. Large numbers of colored people were present at all the gatherings and were treated so kindly that many began to desert the Union Leagues and join the Democrats.²⁹

Responding to an invitation from the New York Demo-

²⁵ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, August 5, 19, 26, 1868.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, August 19, 26, 1868.

²⁷ Perry to Capt. E. L. Parker, Chairman, August 10, 1868, Perry Scrap Book.

²⁸ Perry to A. Burt, Chairman, August 23, 1868, in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, September 9, 1868.

²⁹ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, September 2, 16, 23, October 7, 28, 1868.

cratic Committee to address a mass meeting in Tammany Hall on October 5, Perry wrote hopefully of prospects in the South:

I am happy to inform you that the Democracy of the South, the old Union men, and all the secessionists of principle and honor . . . are up and doing. We shall carry, for Seymour and Blair, beyond a doubt, the States of North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and Virginia. We are making a great effort to carry South Carolina, also. The colored people are losing confidence in their carpet baggers and scalawags, who have told them nothing but lies, and have fulfilled no promises made them. Thousands of the colored people in South Carolina will vote with their former owners, and a much larger number will not vote at all in the Presidential election.³⁰

The Democratic press aroused the electorate to action. On election day, November 3, the *Phoenix* wrote:

The day, big with the fate of the Republic, is upon us. Battle is this day to be joined between the forces of right and wrong—between constitutional freedom and radical despotism. . . .

. . . Here the Democracy contend against great odds. Dusky legions are arrayed against us. But the Saxon band, with their African contingent, will move, in close array, like a Macedonian phalanx. The South Carolina Democracy will do their duty. *Democrats!* Every one of you to the polls today!

Give the day to the State and the country. The time for action is at hand!

Despite their exertions, however, the Democrats lost the state to Grant by nearly 10,000 votes, though the returns showed a party gain of 33,538 since the April election. The middle and up-country counties voted a large Democratic majority, but the heavy Negro vote in the black counties of Georgetown, Charleston, Beaufort, Colleton, and several others brought Radical victory. Greenville went Democratic by a majority of only fifty-three votes, many citizens being too indifferent to go to the polls. Anderson, Pickens, Oconee, and

³⁰ Perry to Douglas Taylor, Chairman, October 1, 1868, *ibid.*, October 21, 1868.

Spartanburg made a much better showing. But two congressional districts did win Democratic congressmen—the Third District, represented by J. P. Reed, of Anderson; and the Fourth (Greenville's district), by W. D. Simpson, of Laurens.³¹

Neither were Perry's optimistic predictions realized in the other Southern states. The Republicans had waged a skilful campaign, exaggerating the sporadic outbreaks in the South as a veritable reign of terror and dubbing the Democrats the party of rebels and traitors. Of the late Confederate states only Georgia and Louisiana were won for Seymour—by fraud and intimidation, the Republicans claimed, but the strong organization of the Democrats was an effective factor.³²

II

From 1868 to 1876 South Carolina was prostrate under the heel of the Radicals. After the election of 1868 most of its citizens, convinced that further resistance was futile, settled down to a policy of quiet acquiescence in Negro suffrage and Radical rule. Orr had even accepted a circuit judgeship at the hands of the legislature, maintaining that prominent men should join the Radical party and try to control it. Another South Carolinian of ability and integrity, Franklin J. Moses, Sr., had accepted the office of Chief Justice, which he retained throughout the Reconstruction period.³³

But Perry took his stand with the uncompromising opponents of the Radical regime. He fought by the side of Hampton, J. P. Thomas, Theodore G. Barker, W. D. Porter, J. D. Pope, and other Democratic leaders for resurrection of the Democratic party and restoration of white rule in the state. Though powerless in 1868, they were awake to every opportunity for accomplishing their goal.³⁴

³¹ Columbia *Phoenix*, November 12, 1868; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, November 4, 11, 18, 1868. The convention of 1868 had restored the name "county" to the districts (Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 256).

³² Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 334-346.

³³ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 127, 142, 447; John A. Leland, *A Voice from South Carolina* (Charleston, 1879), p. 46.

³⁴ Letter of J. P. Thomas in *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, pp. 6-7.

Passivity of the whites in South Carolina in 1869 gave free reign to the orgy of high taxation, corruption, and extravagance of the Scott administration. Editors and public meetings protested against the intolerable taxes imposed by "the plunderers of the people" and began to advocate a reform party composed of the friends of liberty of both races.³⁵ Perry, writing to Andrew Johnson in September to congratulate him on revolutionizing the state of Tennessee,³⁶ spoke thus of the political situation:

In South Carolina we are now crushed with the oppressive taxation of the carpet baggers, scalawags and negroes, who have control of the State Government. But a day of reckoning is at hand, and I confidently believe that the Democratic party will have the ascendancy in our Legislature at the next election. The people are quiet, & determined to preserve the peace of the State, patiently submitting to all their wrongs with the hope of redressing them, in due time, through the Ballot Box.³⁷

Early in 1870 conservative newspapers took the lead in urging all classes and races desiring reform to unite in making the election of that year one of deliverance from Radical rule. A "Union Reform Party" was organized and nominated Richard B. Carpenter, a Republican lawyer from Kentucky, for governor, and General M. C. Butler, a Democrat of Edgefield, for lieutenant-governor. The party, bidding for Negro support, endorsed the Fifteenth Amendment and nominated Negroes along with whites for the legislature and county offices.³⁸ Perry strongly supported the movement and presided over the meeting at Greenville on July 29 at which the Union Reform candidates spoke. General Butler boldly indicted Scott's administration as a disgrace to America, and his

³⁵ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, September 15, October 6, 1869.

³⁶ Johnson had returned from Washington in time to aid in the victory of DeWitt C. Senter, representing the moderate wing of the Republicans, in the gubernatorial race against the Radicals (Henry, *Story of Reconstruction*, pp. 379-380).

³⁷ September 12, 1869, Johnson Papers.

³⁸ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 447-448; Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, April 6, 13, May 25, June 22, 1870.

pretension of friendship for the colored people as wholly insincere. Carpenter also denounced the "Scott Ring" and declared his determination to defend the rights of all classes in the state.³⁹

The campaign was energetically waged throughout the state. The reformers set up Union Reform clubs in each election precinct to counteract the work of the Union Leagues, while the Radical legislature organized a "State Constabulary Force" and Negro militia to keep the colored people in line. Disorder, rioting, and violence occurred. Election returns showed the Radicals more than ever ascendant in the state. The "Scott Ring" was still securely in the saddle, and the legislature more a black parliament than ever, with the notorious scalawag, F. J. Moses, Jr., Speaker of the House. Corruption and extravagance ran riot in the state.⁴⁰

In 1872 the Democrats, despairing of redemption through party organization, did not put out a state ticket, though the Executive Committee urged running party candidates in the counties. The contest was waged between two factions of the Radicals—the Regulars nominating F. J. Moses, Jr., for governor, and a bolting group of reformers led by Orr nominating Reuben Tomlinson.⁴¹

At the urgent solicitation of his old constituents who thought that he could be of some service "in staying the corruption & roguery of the Legislature," Perry reluctantly accepted the Democratic nomination for the state Senate. Immediately afterwards, however, a Democratic convention of delegates from the Fourth Congressional District met in Columbia and unanimously nominated him for Congress. Though he had very little hope of success, Perry was relieved not to have to serve in the legislature.⁴² In his letter of acceptance he wrote:

³⁹ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, August 3, 1870.

⁴⁰ Henry T. Thompson, *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina* (Columbia, 1927), pp. 47-53; Leland, *A Voice from South Carolina*, pp. 47-85; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 119, 130, 143-144.

⁴¹ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 464-468.

⁴² Autobiography, 1874, p. 185; Columbia *Phoenix*, September 10, 1872.

The intelligence, education and wealth of the State of South Carolina, comprising 40,000 or 62,000* voters, possessing, in a great measure, all the commerce, agriculture and manufactures of the entire State, are unrepresented in the Congress of the United States, and only partially represented in our State Legislature. . . . This Congressional District is the only one in the whole State in which there is a chance of electing a representative of the white people. If elected, therefore, I shall have the proud distinction of being the sole representative of the virtue, intelligence and wealth of South Carolina in the National Congress.

He stated that his principles were in sympathy with the Liberal Republican party and its candidate for President, Horace Greeley, whose purpose was reconciliation between the sections and the two races of the South, and restoration of republican principles of government.⁴³

Perry's nomination was enthusiastically endorsed throughout the state. Said the *Charleston News*:

Mr. Perry is a gentleman of large experience in public affairs, and his strong will and high character will make him a fit representative of South Carolina upon the floor of Congress. Nor will the people of his district forget that Mr. Perry, although elected from the Fourth District, will represent the Conservatives of the whole State. . . .

The *Columbia Phoenix* wrote:

There is, perhaps, no man more generally known throughout the State than ex-Governor Perry, nor one more universally esteemed and respected for sterling qualities of head and heart. . . . It will be well for South Carolina to have one true and trusty servant in Congress, and no better man could be selected than B. F. Perry. A man of the purest character, of distinguished ability, and of chivalrous devotion to South Carolina, he will be as a pillar of strength to us in Washington.

"The cause of this outraged State would find in him a noble champion," asserted the *Columbia Carolinian*. The news-

* *Sic*, 42,000?

⁴³ Perry to J. H. Rion *et al.*, September 11, 1872, in Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 203 ff.

papers of the Fourth Congressional District pushed his candidature.⁴⁴

Despite his advancing age and declining strength, Perry entered into a zealous canvass of the large district. As in former years, he thoroughly enjoyed the campaign, renewing acquaintance with old and valued friends and making many new ones. Everywhere he was cordially received. For several days after the election it was reported that he had defeated the Radical candidate, A. S. Wallace. He had carried Greenville County by a majority of 461, and also Union and York. But the white population, hopeless of success, had not turned out well at the polls, and final returns for the district showed Wallace victorious. The same apathy, plus election frauds, caused the overwhelming defeat of the bolting state ticket and the establishment of a Radical regime more corrupt than ever. South Carolina was now at the mercy of the unscrupulous Moses and a legislature three-fourths colored.⁴⁵

Perry published an address to his constituency lamenting the result:

It seems to indicate that there is to be no change in the present corrupt, oppressive and infamously rotten State Government, or hope of representation for the white people of South Carolina in the Congress of the United States. . . .

It is sad and melancholy to think that the honest, patriotic and virtuous white people of South Carolina are in some measure responsible for this horrible and appalling condition of public affairs. In many counties they did not turn out to vote on the day of election. Can human weakness and human apathy exceed this? The negro, carpet-baggers and scalawags turned out, almost to a man. . . .⁴⁶

Thereafter, as a prominent citizen of Columbia remarked,

⁴⁴ Editorials, reprinted in Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 204-210.

⁴⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 178, 185; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 212-216; *In Memoriam Benjamin F. Perry*, pp. 11, 41-42; *Columbia Phoenix*, October 18-20, 23, 29, 1872.

⁴⁶ "To the Democratic and Conservative Voters of the Fourth Congressional District," *Columbia Phoenix*, October 29, 1872; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 212-216.

"rogues and rascals held high carnival in the State and city governments." James S. Pike, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, visiting the capital in 1873, wrote: "The rule of South Carolina should not be dignified with the name of government. It is the installation of a huge system of brigandage." Standing in front of the State House, he watched the strange assortment of humanity issuing from the legislative chambers. "It is the spectacle of a society suddenly turned bottom-side up," he wrote. "In the place of this old aristocratic society stands the rude form of the most ignorant democracy that mankind ever saw, invested with the functions of government."⁴⁷

So notoriously corrupt had the government become that a strong movement for reform arose within the Radical party. In 1874 a group of "Independent" Radicals nominated John T. Green, an honorable and talented native lawyer, for governor in opposition to Daniel H. Chamberlain, nominee of the Regular Republicans. The bolters denounced the extravagance and thievery of the ruling ring and appealed to the conservatives to join them. Deeming it useless to put out a separate ticket, the latter met in Columbia and endorsed the Independent candidates, adopting a platform for "Honesty and Economy" in the administration of the state government.⁴⁸ Perry, unable to attend the convention because of his health, had published a letter in the *Phoenix* two weeks earlier strongly urging Democratic support of the bolting candidates. He wrote:

The only issue now before the people of South Carolina is one of reform in our State Government. It is simply a question of honesty and roguery. All good men, whether Republicans or Democrats, white or colored, should unite in trying to rescue the State from the hands of the rogues, swindlers and corrupt men who have had control of it for seven or eight years past, and have utterly

⁴⁷ Edwin J. Scott, *Random Recollections of a Long Life, 1806 to 1876* (Columbia, 1884), p. 204; James S. Pike, *The Prostrate State: South Carolina Under Negro Government* (New York, 1935), pp. 10-21, 58.

⁴⁸ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 470-473; Thompson, *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina*, pp. 79-80.

destroyed the credit and honor of the State. In the selection of candidates for Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, we should only inquire whether they are honest and capable. It matters not what may be their color or race—whether they are Democrats or Republicans. . . .

Let every white man make it a point of honor to turn out at the election and vote for the nominees. He who stays at home or refuses to vote is wanting in patriotism or wisdom, one or the other, or both, and deserves to live all his life the subject of thieves, robbers and plunderers. . . .⁴⁹

But the Radical machine was invincible, and rode to victory in the election by a vote of 80,403 to 68,818. Chamberlain, once in office, however, renounced the corrupt ring that had elected him and became a reformer. His inaugural address, denouncing the gross extravagance of the Scott and Moses administrations, alarmed the Radicals and elicited warm approbation from the conservative press. Though opposed by the Radical majority in the legislature, he reformed many abuses and introduced economy and honesty into the administration.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *Columbia Phoenix*, September 27, 1874.

⁵⁰ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 116, 121, 168-169, 473-477; Walter Allen, *Governor Chamberlain's Administration in South Carolina: A Chapter of Reconstruction in the Southern States* (New York and London, 1888), pp. 10-37.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Redemption

THE CLOSE of the first year of his administration found Chamberlain becoming popular throughout the state. Some influential South Carolina newspapers—the Charleston *News and Courier* in the lead—advocated support of him by the Conservatives in the next election. The Greenville *Daily News* and several other journals, however, urged a straight-out Democratic ticket.¹ On November 27 Perry wrote to the editor of the *News and Courier* heartily endorsing his views:

The only question at issue now in South Carolina is reform, and an honest administration of the government. . . . There is nothing else worthy of entering into the canvass next fall for State officers, county officers and members of the Legislature. If I thought a Republican, white or colored, more honest and more competent than a Democrat, I should certainly vote for him, notwithstanding my strong life-long Democratic feelings and principles.

If Governor Chamberlain continues to pursue the course he has done for the last twelve months, I think it would be exceedingly unwise and ungrateful for the Democratic party to oppose his re-election. . . .

It is urged by those who are in favor of a straight Democratic ticket, that we can, by proper exertion, triumph in South Carolina, as the Democratic party has done in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. They should remember that we have a larger colored majority in South Carolina to overcome than they had in any of those States. They should likewise consider that such a course

¹ Alfred B. Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts: South Carolina's Deliverance in 1876* (Charleston, 1935), p. 32; Thompson, *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina*, pp. 96-98.

would only tend to keep the colored people united, under their old unprincipled leaders. . . .²

In December Chamberlain greatly strengthened his position with the Conservatives when he refused to commission two infamous circuit judges elected by the legislature, F. J. Moses, Jr., and W. J. Whipper. At the call of the *News and Courier*, public meetings were held in many counties to endorse his action. The Democratic State Executive Committee, meeting in Columbia, advised thorough reorganization of the Democratic party as the only means of redeeming the state government; but they differed as to whether this could best be accomplished by a straight-out Democratic ticket or fusion with the reform wing of the Radicals.³

At the Democratic county convention in Greenville on February 12, Perry made a speech praising Chamberlain for his "heroic act of Roman virtue and firmness" and calling upon the Democrats to support him in the coming election. "The opportunity is now before us of reforming and redeeming the State. . . . We must lay aside all of our party prejudices, and prejudices of race and color," he declared. The convention unanimously adopted his resolutions endorsing Chamberlain and urging every honest man, whether white or colored, to assist in organizing affiliated clubs of Democrats and Republicans in every county and township.⁴ The editor of the *Greenville News* denounced the platform, declaring that he could not take Governor Chamberlain to his "Democratic bosom." Perry retorted: "Whilst Governor Chamberlain pursues the patriotic course which has, thus far, marked his administration, I am willing to support him, whether he be Republican or Democrat! carpetbagger or scallawag! saint or devil!"⁵

When the Democratic state convention met in Columbia

² Reprinted in *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, December 8, 1875.

³ Allen, *Chamberlain's Administration*, pp. 192-215; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 480-481; *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, January 19, 1876.

⁴ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, February 16, 1876.

⁵ Perry to Editor of *Greenville News*, February 21, 1876, Perry Scrap Book.

in May to formulate a platform and elect delegates to the national convention in St. Louis, sentiment was still divided on the policy to be pursued in the state election. General M. W. Gary advocated running a straight-out party ticket and winning the election by intimidation and violence, as Mississippi had done the preceding year. A vigorous debate ensued, ending with adoption of the report of the Resolutions Committee deferring the question but urging the counties to organize. Perry was elected one of the alternates to the national convention.⁶

On June 22 he left Greenville for St. Louis. He wrote frequent accounts of his travels and the sessions of the convention for publication in the *Enterprise and Mountaineer*. After the nomination of Samuel J. Tilden and Thomas A. Hendricks, he went on to the Centennial Exposition. Upon his return to Greenville, he continued his articles for several months.⁷

Meanwhile events in South Carolina united the Democrats in a determination to make a straight-out fight in November. On July 4 two young white men from Edgefield, passing through the streets of Hamburg, were blocked by a Negro militia company under Dock Adams. Four days later M. C. Butler, who was engaged to prosecute the militia captain, came to Hamburg, followed by two or three hundred armed white men. Butler conferred with Adams and the Negro trial justice, Prince Rivers, and offered to stop the prosecution if the company were disarmed. Upon their refusal, a collision occurred in which one white and six Negroes were killed. Chamberlain, on the ground that the whites were starting the "Mississippi Plan," immediately requested Grant to be ready to send Federal troops. The Democrats, indignant at this attempt to bolster the waning fortunes of the South Carolina Republicans, called a state convention for August 15 to take decisive action. During the interval Democratic county con-

⁶ Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 31-32; *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, May 10, 17, 1876.

⁷ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, June 28-October 18, 1876.

ventions were held, several of which urged a straight-out ticket.⁸ On August 17 the state convention nominated a Democratic ticket with Hampton for governor and W. D. Simpson, of Laurens, for lieutenant-governor. All Democratic factions in the state enthusiastically endorsed it.⁹

Chamberlain was not formally nominated by the Republicans until September, but during July and August he toured the state making speeches in defense of his administration. The Democrats nullified his efforts by appearing in armed bands and demanding a place on the program. They had obtained full instructions in the "Mississippi Plan." When Chamberlain came to Edgefield, he found five or six hundred white men drawn up around the speaker's stand. Butler and Gary then mounted the platform and demanded a division of time, to which the Governor agreed. After Chamberlain's address, which was greeted with jeers and insults, they proceeded to attack him in violently abusive speeches. So many similar episodes occurred in other towns that the Republicans finally gave up their tours.¹⁰

Perry took a very active part in the Democratic campaign in Greenville and adjacent counties. On July 27 he made an address at Bruton's Old Fields, reminding his audience that he had spoken there nearly fifty years before against nullification. How many familiar faces did he miss in the audience!

They have been spared the humiliation and degradation which we now endure. And I see before me another generation which has come forward since my entrance in public life. . . . But I have the gratification of knowing that like your fathers you are all Democrats, hating tyranny, corruption and oppression; and ready to unite with the Democratic party all over the State in a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether to redeem the State and the United States from the hand of the tyrant.¹¹

⁸ Allen, *Chamberlain's Administration*, pp. 307-318; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 485-490; *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, July 19, August 2, 9, 1876.

⁹ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, August 23, 30, 1876; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 490-492.

¹⁰ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 492-494, 500; Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 65-67.

¹¹ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, August 9, 1876.

After the nomination of Hampton, Perry strongly supported the straight-out ticket. On August 24 he spoke at Glassy Mountain, the old Unionist stronghold of Greenville County. He thanked his friends of the mountains for the loyal support they had always given him in politics. The section had been dubbed "Dark Corner" by the Nullifiers because it gave them only one vote out of 170. In 1860 they alone, of all his constituents, had voted for him and the other anti-secessionist candidates to the state convention. When civil war came, they had been disposed to ignore it; but when he told them it was their duty to defend the state, they had volunteered. Now he was urging them to overthrow the Radical government by rallying to the support of Hampton and Tilden. "These nominations should fill our hearts with pride," he averred, "and increase our exertions in the cause of Democracy. Their elections will redeem the State and the United States."¹²

In September the Democrats started a whirlwind canvass, holding at least one spectacular campaign meeting in every county seat. On the day that Hampton and the other nominees appeared in town, throngs turned out to greet them with brass bands, cannon, colorful parades, and dramatic tableaux. "Hurrah for Hampton!" became the slogan of the white populace of the state; and the red shirt, the insigne of his followers. The campaign opened on September 2 in Anderson, where sixteen hundred mounted men formed a procession more than a mile in length.¹³

On September 4 Perry spoke at the "Hampton Day" rally at Walhalla, the county seat of his native Oconee. Next to Hampton himself, Perry was the great feature of the day.¹⁴ He spoke of the principles of the Democratic party, comparing the glorious history of the Republic under its rule with the corruption and tyranny of the Republicans. Tilden, "the great reformer and statesman of New York," he said, was destined

¹² *Ibid.*, August 30, 1876.

¹³ Thompson, *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina*, pp. 112-115; Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 161-175.

¹⁴ Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 165-166.

by an all-wise Providence to purge the Federal Government and bring back its original purity and constitutional freedom; and Hampton, "the gallant soldier and noble gentleman," to rescue the old Palmetto State from the shameful rule of the Radicals. He made a special appeal to the Negroes to join the Democrats:

You have been, since your emancipation, the dupes and political slaves of mean, unprincipled carpet-baggers, traitors, Judas Iscariots. . . . If you do not throw off your Radical slavery and elect good men to office, the Democrats will have to withdraw their patronage from you and cease to employ you or rent you their lands.¹⁵

The Hampton campaign meeting in Greenville was set for September 7. The Democratic clubs of the town and county made great preparations for the eventful day. When Hampton arrived by train from Pickens on the night of September 5, cavalymen with torches escorted him through brilliantly illuminated streets to the Mansion House. On the morning of the seventh the roar of cannon reverberated, and lines of horsemen in varied colors proceeded to the grand rallying point at the Fair Grounds. Carriages and wagons filled with people poured into the city from all quarters of the county. At ten o'clock the cry went up from jostling crowds on the streets, "Here they come!" From the Mansion House came a cavalcade led by the Greenville Helicon Band in a wagon drawn by four white horses. Behind it rode Hampton, W. D. Simpson, and Perry in a phaeton drawn by four large iron grays. Next appeared barouches with the other candidates and Greenville notables. Last in line came the cavalry escort. It was a colorful scene, the bright uniforms gleaming in the sun against the background of green mountains.

At a cannon signal the long cavalcade left the Fair Grounds and proceeded down Rutherford, Buncombe, and Main streets to Furman University Grove, where the speaker's stand had been erected. Preceded by the Robert E. Lee Fire

¹⁵ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, September 20, 1876.

Company in brilliant uniform and the Greenville Helicon Band, playing a stirring march, the distinguished speakers of the day rode through the flag-bedecked streets, bowing and smiling to the cheering throngs. Behind them came Captain Vardry E. McBee's cavalry company with flowing yellow scarfs, then the blue-uniformed Pendleton Cornet Band in a fine wagon drawn by four horses, then five other cavalry companies in colorful array. A long line of carriages, buggies, and wagons followed.

When the speakers were assembled on the stand, cannon announced the opening of the program. Perry stepped forward and "in a few well-chosen and most appropriate words" introduced Hampton, who was received with cheer upon cheer by the audience. Hampton expressed his thanks, modestly stating that he knew the cause they had at heart was redemption of the state and that he was only the representative of that cause. As for the charge made by his enemies that he was a fire-eater, he knew it could make no impression on the people of South Carolina. He had been a Union man before the war, and since the war had advocated peace, harmony, and reconciliation between the North and South and all classes and colors in the state. He reminded the colored people that he had been the first white man to address them after the war and had advocated giving them the right to vote. If elected he would give every man the same protection. Perry then introduced, in turn, the candidate for lieutenant-governor, W. D. Simpson, who described the rottenness of the Republicans; and the two Confederate generals, James Conner, candidate for attorney-general, and Samuel McGowan, candidate for presidential elector, who were enthusiastically received.

Greenville continued the celebration into the night, when a torchlight procession, including many Red Shirts, formed on Buncombe Street and marched through the main thoroughfares of the city to the courthouse square, where candidates for Congress and solicitor addressed them. Artillery heralded their approach, and bonfires lighted the way. Masses on the

sidewalks shouted and hurrahed; rockets, balloons, and bands added to the hilarity.¹⁶

The campaign was becoming bitter in certain sections of the state despite the warning of Hampton and the Democratic Executive Committee against any acts that might give the Radicals an excuse to call for additional Federal troops. For months the Democrats had been organizing rifle clubs, which increased to 290 by election day and exerted a powerful influence in carrying the state for Hampton. Radical speakers were uncomfortable in their presence, and Negroes stayed away from the polls. On September 7 a serious riot broke out in Charleston when a Negro mob attacked Negro Democrats who were being escorted by whites from a meeting of a colored Democratic club. In mid-September, Ellenton witnessed an armed conflict in which Negroes fired upon whites from ambush, wrecked trains, and burned homes. Finally eight hundred whites banded together and succeeded in driving the blacks from their hiding places in the swamps. A similar episode occurred in Cainhoy in Charleston County on October 16. These outbreaks gave Chamberlain an opportunity of employing Federal troops and securing from Grant reinforcements for General Thomas H. Ruger in Columbia.

Hampton urged his followers to submit peaceably to the military measures, and the Democratic Executive Committee acquiesced in Chamberlain's proclamation in October disbanding the rifle clubs. The Democrats concentrated their efforts on winning the Negroes to their side by persuasive methods. Prominent speakers appealed to them from the platform; tactful politicians singled out influential Negroes to work on; some of the Democratic county clubs resolved not to employ Radicals or to rent them lands and homes.¹⁷

Perry was especially active in campaigning for the Negro vote. In September he published a letter in the *Charleston News and Courier* entitled "Who Freed the Slaves?" in refu-

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, September 13, 1876.

¹⁷ Thompson, *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina*, pp. 120-129; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 499-511.

tation of Chamberlain's campaign speeches claiming that the Republican party had freed the Negroes and thus deserved their support. Perry stated that slavery in South Carolina had been abolished by the state convention of 1865 representing all the slaveholders of the state, and by ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment by the legislature—and in no other way. As for Chamberlain's assertion that the Republican party had "great interest and tender regard" for the colored people, Perry answered: "We will find that it exists solely and ever has in the advancement of their own interest." He proceeded to show that Northerners had introduced slavery solely for profit, had undertaken emancipation only as a war measure, and had enfranchised the blacks and disfranchised the whites only to carry the South for the Radicals. "And they are now actuated by the same principles and the same feelings," he declared, "when they tell the colored people to vote for the carpet baggers and scalawags who represent the Republican party in the Southern States."¹⁸

In another letter, published in the *Enterprise and Mountaineer* in October, he thus appealed to the Negroes:

My colored friends, you are as deeply interested in this Revolution as we are. This corrupt imbecile government, which you are supporting is incapable of protecting you. It has not the confidence of the intelligence and virtue of the State. You have been encouraged by its dastardly rulers to commit crimes and outrages on society, and the tumultuous slaughter of your race has been the consequence. The same scenes were enacted in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, until the Democrats got possession of the State governments, and then all was peace and quiet. You must have a Governor who will protect you and not run away when tumults and riots occur. General Wade Hampton will make you that Governor, and he has pledged his solemn word to enforce the laws and see justice done to all alike, without regard to race and color.

You have, my colored friends, been the political slaves of unprincipled men ever since you were emancipated. They have made tools of you for their own aggrandizement and kept you in poverty

¹⁸ Letter of Perry to Governor Chamberlain, September 15, 1876, in Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 308-314.

and want. I ask you to say how much better off you are this day in worldly goods, than when you were set free? And you will never be better off till we have a better government. In Georgia the colored people have acquired considerable wealth since they have been living under a Democratic rule. They now pay taxes on six millions of property. Your leaders have all grown rich, whilst you are in poverty. No matter how much they steal, they never divide with you.¹⁹

Despite his seventy-one years Perry campaigned with all the ardor of his youth. Late in September he took part in the Hampton Day celebration at Honeapath, addressing an audience of six thousand in stirring words:

South Carolina is, at this time, in a blaze of enthusiasm. Tilden and Hampton, Democracy and Reform, are the watch words of this your grand movement. . . .

I am, fellow citizens, an old man, and remember the political excitements of 1828, 1850 and 1860. But they were a mere tempest in a tea pot compared to this whirlwind of Reform, which is sweeping over the old Palmetto State. . . .²⁰

The campaign in Greenville culminated in a huge demonstration on October 31. Perry first addressed the audience in a powerful appeal to both races to unite for redemption of the state:

Fellow-Citizens—It fills my heart with pride and patriotism to see this vast concourse of persons assembled before me, and witness their zeal and enthusiasm in the cause of their down-trodden and prostrate State.

One hundred years ago, fellow-citizens, our forefathers revolutionized their government, dissolved their connection with the mother country, and declared the colonies free, sovereign and independent States. We, their descendants, in this centennial year of American Independence, inheriting their spirit and love of liberty, are in the midst of another great revolution which is to throw off the most infamous government that ever disgraced civilization. The revolution of 1776 was a bloody struggle for seven or eight

¹⁹ October 25, 1876.

²⁰ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, September 27, October 4, 1876.

years. Ours is a bloodless and peaceful one, yet more important in its consequences than that of our forefathers. The causes which impell us to it, and the wrongs and oppressions which we have borne for the last ten years are infinitely greater than the grievances of which the honest patriots of '76 complained.

For the last seven or eight years the property holders of South Carolina have been taxed without representation, not as our forefathers were by two pence a pound on tea, or four shillings on stamped paper, but to the entire income of our estates, and in many instances to their confiscation. A horde of alien adventurers from the North, black and white, without fortune or character have come here, and by uniting with the non-property holders of the State, have taken possession of the government and levied these enormous taxes. The proceeds they have stolen or appropriated to their own individual and private purposes.

. . . But, fellow-citizens, would to God this crushing taxation were our only grievance against the present State government of South Carolina. In order to crush our liberties as well as our fortunes, the present "cruel and unrelenting, cold-hearted tyrant," who fills the Executive chair, has called in the army of the United States, to prevent the free exercise of the right of suffrage at the ensuing election, he himself being a candidate for re-election. . . .

This is not all that our carpet bag governor from Massachusetts has done to secure his election. He and his henchmen have endeavored to stir up insurrections and massacres. He has disarmed the white people and armed the negroes. . . . He endeavored to give to a riot at Hamburg a political bearing, in order to wave the bloody shirt at the north in the presidential canvass. At Ellenton . . . he is having hundreds of democrats arrested for defending their families and property, and hurried off to jail, on the eve of his own election. . . . When democratic colored men were assaulted and mobbed in Charleston, by radicals, he did not interfere.

Is it possible, fellow citizens, for any white man in this vast assemblage . . . to sustain such a candidate for Governor of South Carolina? If there is let him and his children and his children's children be branded with infamy and ostracised from all honorable and social intercourse. If there be any colored man here, present,

who will support Daniel H. Chamberlain in preference to Wade Hampton, let him look to Radicals only for employment now and forever.²¹

By election day, November 7, the state was ablaze with excitement. When the polls opened at 6:00 A.M. at Greenville, a crowd of 300 was already present, and soon increased to 1,200. The voters lined up in front of the old courthouse and passed along the curb to a rear window, through which the ballots were deposited. Every precaution had been taken to preserve order and prevent fraud. Each party had a challenger at the polls—Vardry McBee for the Democrats and Thomas Briar (colored) for the Republicans. The mayor and council had closed the bars the preceding day to reduce intoxication to a minimum. Police were stationed near the window, and John P. Scruggs, chief United States deputy marshal, stood by. About eleven o'clock Briar and two other Negroes, at the head of a party of colored people, tried to crash through the police to the ballot box. Scruggs aided their efforts, and the police were repulsed until Captain H. C. Cook and his Federal troops, whom Mayor Cleveland had requested to be on hand, came to their rescue. The voting then proceeded quietly until the close of the day, though the heaviest portion was over by three o'clock. Returns from the city box showed that Hampton had carried Greenville by a vote of 964 to 826. The county also went Democratic by a majority of 2,446.²²

The contest was close throughout the state. Both Democrats and Republicans claimed victory, and charged the opposing party with fraud in the election. From the returns sent in by the county canvassers, Hampton had won by a majority of 1,134, and the Republican presidential electors by about 1,000. But the Republicans contended that the votes of several counties should be thrown out, giving Chamberlain a majority of over 3,000. As for the presidential contest, Tilden had won 184 electoral votes and needed only one more from the

²¹ *Ibid.*, November 8, 1876.

²² *Ibid.*, November 8, 15, 1876.

contested returns in Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana to carry the election. Grant, meanwhile, had sent reinforcements of Federal troops to the doubtful states.²³ Perry published a letter in the *Enterprise and Mountaineer* of November 15 warning his fellow-citizens of the determination of the President to sustain the Radical canvassers. Some deep villainy was contemplated by Grant and Chamberlain, he declared. "Democrats, be prepared for the result."

By law in South Carolina the State Board of Canvassers—now composed of five Republican state officers, three of whom were candidates for re-election—was to tabulate the returns of the county canvassers and certify them to the Secretary of State, since the State Board had the power of determining all contested elections not otherwise provided for in the constitution. The constitution clearly conferred the power of deciding disputed elections for governor and lieutenant-governor upon the legislature, and the Democrats contended that the clause giving each house the right to judge of the election returns and qualifications of its own members precluded the Board from deciding cases of legislators. If returns from all the counties had been accepted, the House would have had a Democratic majority of six, and the Senate a Republican majority of three—thus assuring election of Hampton. But there were contested elections for the House in the counties of Barnwell, Edgefield, and Laurens; and the Board, defying the order of the Supreme Court to certify the election of senators and representatives as reported by the county canvassers, threw out the votes of Edgefield and Laurens in its report to the Secretary of State. Elimination of the eight Democratic members from these counties resulted in a Republican majority in both houses and rendered certain the election of Chamberlain.

When the Democratic House appeared in a body at the State House at the opening session, the Edgefield and Laurens members, though holding certificates from the Supreme Court, were refused admission by Federal troops. The Democrats

²³ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 514-522; Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 863-865.

then withdrew to Carolina Hall, claiming to be the only legal House since they constituted a majority of the full membership. They returned to the Capitol on November 30 and entered the House chamber while the Republicans were out. For four days and nights two Speakers and two Houses occupied the hall. But when Hampton saw that the situation would lead to armed conflict, he ordered his followers to retire. Thereafter, a dual government existed in South Carolina. The Republicans inaugurated Chamberlain on December 7 and maintained control of the State House with Federal troops; the Democrats inaugurated Hampton on December 14.²⁴

Perry, writing an indignant protest against Grant's "military usurpation," urged:

Let our democratic members hold on, night and day, to their seats, until they can make a compromise with the radicals, or are turned out by Grant's bayonets.—"Don't give up the ship." "Hold the fort" and preserve the peace. Let nothing, nothing, nothing bring you in contact with the federal troops. Time will correct all abuses and military usurpations.²⁵

Sustained by the state Supreme Court and the loyalty of the people, the Hampton regime grew constantly stronger. Taxes levied by the Republicans went uncollected, while contributions called for by the Democrats were cheerfully paid. Public meetings over the state pledged support to Hampton.²⁶ At the Democratic mass meeting for Greenville County on January 18 Perry offered a preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, proclaiming Chamberlain "a hypocritical pretender, and foul usurper" and pledging their "lives, fortune and sacred honor" never to pay one cent of the enormous tax levied by his "bogus legislature." To Wade Hamp-

²⁴ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 517-531; Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 384-425; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 314-319.

²⁵ Letter of Perry, "The State and Federal Government," Perry Scrap Book.

²⁶ Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction* pp. 530-536; Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 419-438.

ton they pledged allegiance and resolved to pay "voluntarily and cheerfully" all contributions called for by him and his Democratic legislature.²⁷

When the disputed presidential election was decided in favor of Hayes—though it was well known that Tilden was actually elected—the Democrats acquiesced on the understanding that the Radical governments in South Carolina and Louisiana would disappear. Chamberlain and Hampton were summoned to Washington for a conference with the President and Cabinet, who virtually decreed the fall of Chamberlain by ordering the withdrawal of Federal troops from Columbia on April 10.²⁸ Chamberlain was infuriated and, before turning over the executive office to Hampton on April 11, made a farewell address to the Republicans of South Carolina charging Hayes with a cowardly abandonment and betrayal of his friends.²⁹

Perry replied to Chamberlain's ill-natured address in a scathing letter pronouncing it "unequaled in audacity, falsehood, and hypocrisy," and its author "an enigma in morals and politics."³⁰ After withdrawal of the Federal troops, the carpetbaggers soon left the state. In an article entitled "Good News from Columbia" Perry rejoiced that Chamberlain, Corbin, Cardozo, Elliott, and other notorious Radicals were departing with their "ill-gotten wealth." But of Carolina's own sons who had supported them he wrote:

Now, if it would please God, in his mercy, to cause Franklin J. Moses and all his thieving crew of scalawags, who have been trai-

²⁷ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, January 17, 24, 1877.

²⁸ Randall, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 867-879; Simkins and Woody, *South Carolina during Reconstruction*, pp. 536-541; Williams, *Hampton and his Red Shirts*, pp. 439-448.

²⁹ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, April 18, 1877. Many years later Chamberlain wrote a résumé of his experiences in South Carolina, bitterly indicting the Republican regime and condoning the Democrats for its overthrow. He paid tribute to Hampton and declared that if the Republicans had been victorious in 1876 they could never have given good government, handicapped as they were with a preponderance of ignorant, incompetent, and dishonest members (Daniel H. Chamberlain, "Reconstruction in South Carolina," *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXXVII, April, 1901, 473-484).

³⁰ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, April 18, 1877.

tors to their State and every honorable feeling for the last ten years, to make their exodus from South Carolina with the carpet-baggers, what a great blessing it would be to society. These "unworthy sons of the soil" are meaner and viler than carpet-baggers, for they were "to the manor-born." If they had any sense of shame left, they would seek some other country in which to enjoy their stealings, plunder and thirty pieces of silver. . . . But whilst they continue to "abuse the patience" of all honorable men by remaining here, . . . they should be made to feel the scorn and contempt of the people, which they have so long and justly merited.

We would advise them in their exodus not to stop in New York or the New England States, as the carpet-baggers propose doing; but to go to Australia, where they will find a new and rich country of lands, filled with fit associates and congenial spirits, who have not been so fortunate as they have, in escaping the penalties of the law for swindling, stealing and forgery. . . .³¹

³¹ *Ibid.*, May 9, 1877.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Sans Souci

FROM HIS heavy cares during the Reconstruction period Perry found repose in his happy family life. He resided in his old home until 1871, when he moved to Sans Souci, a farm three miles north of Greenville. There, with the rolling green hills around him and the hazy Blue Ridge in the distance, he spent the remaining years of his life. It was an enchanting scene, resembling that of his childhood home. In 1877 he and his family moved from their modest cottage into a large brick home, built in the ornate style of the period, with mansard roof, gabled windows, and tall cupola in front. High steps led to the first story, and a porch extended around all sides except the right front, from which a room with bay windows projected. Trailing vines shaded the veranda, and ivy softened the walls.¹

The grounds were artistically landscaped, with shrubbery, arbor vitae, magnolias, and oaks dotting the lawn. A circular driveway led to the front entrance, which faced toward the town. The back porch commanded a magnificent view of the mountains. The grounds contained extensive flower gardens and an orchard with over a thousand fruit trees.

The front steps led to a spacious hallway which ran the length of the house. On the left were two large libraries connected by folding doors. Having constantly added to his collection of books, Perry now owned four or five thousand miscellaneous volumes and a thousand law books, many of them old and rare works. It was one of the most extensive and

¹ Autobiography, 1874, p. 188; Perry to Hext M. Perry, June 20, 1872, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, p. 66.

best-selected libraries in the state. High ceilings, handsome rugs and furnishings gave a luxurious appearance to the rooms. On the right of the hallway were two airy bedrooms, separated by a side hall, from which a circular stairway led to the second story. The dining room, resplendent with mahogany furniture and silverware, was in the basement.²

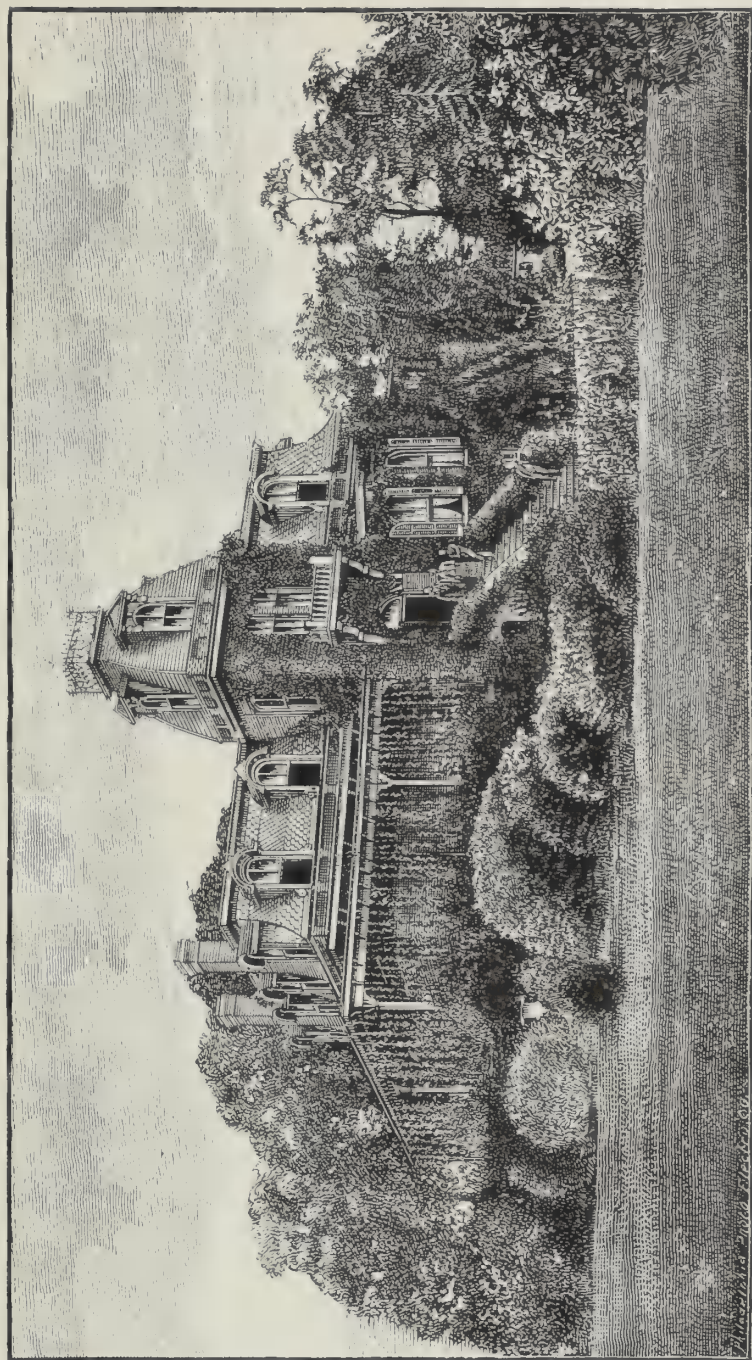
Perry still found his greatest contentment at home with his wife and children. Mrs. Perry managed *Sans Souci* with tranquil efficiency. Perry wrote of her in 1874:

Lizzie has been the personification of industry all her life & is never one moment idle. If not at work on her household affairs she is reading or writing. . . . Her health has been most extraordinary, scarcely ever sick! When married she weighed ninety six pounds, but has fattened up considerable in the latter part of her life, & now weighs one hundred & forty pounds.

He continued a tender husband. "In the course of thirty seven years of our married life," he observed, "we have occasionally differed in our views . . . and notwithstanding my great firmness and obstinacy, I have usually gratified her wishes & feelings, unless I was satisfied her judgement was wrong & evil would be the result."

Of his children he wrote: "We have been, I think, very indulgent to our children, without its producing any bad results. They have all grown up with good habits of industry, sobriety & morality, and are likely to do well." Willie was rising rapidly in his profession. Still in law partnership with his father, he gradually took over most of the practice. He was elected solicitor of the Eighth Circuit in 1868 and filled the office for four years with distinction. He inherited his father's interest in politics, serving as representative in the South Carolina

²Conversation of author with Perry's granddaughter, Mrs. Hugh C. Haynsworth, July 24, 1941; Autobiography, 1874, p. 84; visit of author to *Sans Souci*, June 1941. After Perry's death the home was used as a school for girls by Mrs. W. H. Perry, and later became a country club. Mr. B. E. Geer owned it when it burned to the ground a few years ago. (Conversation of author with citizens of Greenville).



SANS SOUCI
(From Perry's *Biographical Sketches*)

House 1866-1867, state senator 1880-1884, and United States congressman 1884-1890.³

Fannie grew up to be a charming woman. After receiving her education at Greenville Female College and the Methodist College in Columbia, she spent two winters in Florida and then returned to Greenville, where she was very popular with the younger social set. Her mother and father entertained frequently for her. She married William Beattie, a wealthy young merchant of Greenville. Perry was very devoted to his daughter, and wrote of her in 1874: "She is a charming & lovely woman, has a great intellect as well as a warm & pure heart." She had a son named for his grandfather, and Perry considered him "the smartest & prettiest little boy I have ever seen." When the child was three years old, Perry wrote an autobiography for him, dwelling especially on interesting episodes of his youth and on happenings after he discontinued his journal. On the flyleaf he wrote:

To my little Grandson Perry Beattie this autobiography is dedicated—I am now in my sixty ninth year, & it is not probable that I shall live for him to know much about me. I hope he will in after life, take some interest in the character of his Grand Father, & maternal ancestors. The events of my life may afford him some amusement & gratification.

William Beattie died suddenly in 1882, and Fannie came with her son and little daughter, Emily, to live with her parents at Sans Souci.⁴

Hext McCall was also a source of pride to his father. He was graduated from the Medical College of Philadelphia and practiced medicine successfully there for many years. He visited his parents at frequent intervals and returned to live in Greenville after his father's death. The two youngest sons, Hayne and Ben, were attending Furman University when

³ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 116, 175, 178, 180-181; *In Memoriam William Hayne Perry* (n.p., n.d., pamphlet, Alabama State Department of Archives and History), *passim*.

⁴ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 176, 180; copy of Perry Journal by Mrs. Perry, p. 88; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, August 23, 1882.

their parents moved to the country. They spent every week end at Sans Souci helping with the farm work, for Perry believed in instilling industrious habits in his children. Willie had driven a wagon and hauled wood after returning from Harvard. Hayne and Ben plowed, hoed, cut wood, and curried horses; yet they stood well in their classes. Hayne, especially, was very gifted. One of his classmates remarked that he seemed to inherit all the noble qualities of his father. But he contracted tuberculosis in 1872, and, like Anna and Frank, lingered only a few months before dying. Perry, despondent, wrote to Hext: "Take care of yourself and do not catch cold—It seems that all of my children are likely to die of consumption." Ben, unlike his brothers, did not care for books, but was interested in agriculture. He quit college and at sixteen became the successful manager of his father's farm. He specialized in raising livestock and won prizes at the State Fair for his Holstein cattle and pedigreed hogs. Happy-natured and democratic, he was popular with his farm hands and neighbors. He took a prominent part in county politics and electioneered adroitly for Willie.⁵

During the lean years of Radical rule Perry managed to live comfortably, supplementing his low professional income with that from his farms and other property. He rented his house in town for \$50 per month and another cottage for \$200 per year. Besides Sans Souci he owned several other farms—Piedmont on Mush Creek, Petro on Saluda River, and Glencoe—which brought him an income of \$1,800 or \$2,000 per year.⁶

Editor J. C. Bailey of the *Enterprise and Mountaineer* was invited to dinner at Sans Souci in July, 1875, and wrote an interesting account of Perry's treatment of his colored laborers. Ben was giving a picnic for them and their friends, about ninety of whom were seated on benches under the trees. A

⁵ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 176-177; Hayne Perry to Hext Perry, September 24, 1871, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.); Perry to *idem*, June 20, 1872, *ibid.*; John Gass to Mrs. Perry, February 28, 1891, *Letters Acknowledging "Letters to Wife,"* pp. 89-90; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, November 18, 1885, July 14, August 4, November 17, 1886.

⁶ Perry to Hext M. Perry, June 20, 1872, Perry Papers (Baker Coll.).

number made speeches from the gin house steps. R. H. Ware, a seventy-six-year-old Negro, said that he expected to remain with Mr. Perry the rest of his life, as he was the only gentleman he had ever found; that he was receiving the best wages he had ever made and could "jump up and crack his heels." Others echoed the sentiment, expressing pride in their crops and appreciation of Perry's kindness. Y. B. B. Berry announced that he would "hold on to Mr. Perry like a briar in a sheep's wool." Morgan Smith asserted that he had worked with thirteen men, but never found anyone but Perry who would give him justice; he thought as much of him as though he were his father or brother. Cal Wright told how Perry had come to his relief with \$100 when he met with an accident, and again had paid \$10 to keep him from jail. When the speeches were over, a committee appointed to examine the tenants' crops for prizes announced its awards. Perry addressed a few words of encouragement to the colored people, and Ben presented the prizes.⁷

Some idea of Perry's progressive farming methods may be obtained from his address to the "Labor Reform Society" of Clinton on March 17, 1877. He advised the members to cut down labor costs and improve their lands by planting less cotton and more grain. He also stressed the value of manuring and subsoiling fields, planting leguminous crops, and raising their own livestock and everything else used on the farm. Lastly, he spoke of the Negro:

It is our duty to be kind and strictly just to all of our tenants and hirelings. This, the rules and regulations of your society require. The negro is not in general very grateful, but he is sensible to kindness, and appreciates it. We have to live together. He has had bestowed on him in the Federal Constitution all the rights and privileges of a citizen . . . and we should endeavor to make him as worthy of them as possible. . . .⁸

Perry and his wife enjoyed having their friends visit them

⁷ Editorial, "The Way to Treat Your Laborers," *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, July 28, 1875.

⁸ *Ibid.*, April 18, 1877.

at Sans Souci. A cadet from the Greenville Military Institute who spent the day with them in 1882 has described their gracious hospitality. Mrs. Perry and Fannie were very cordial and attentive. Perry took him and another young friend, Sam Townes, to the cupola, from which they obtained a lovely view of mountains in three states. He then escorted them over the grounds and back to the library, where they reveled in his valuable collections.⁹

Miss Mattie Verner, a young cousin of Perry's from Wall-halla, visited the family for a week in 1880 and again a few years later. She says that there was an atmosphere of love and contentment at Sans Souci. She found Perry a cultured gentleman, courteous and dignified, and charming in his home. She thought him "grand-looking and wonderful"; he was very erect and wore a wig. Mrs. Perry was beautiful, with fair complexion and perfect features, but not the intellectual equal of Perry. Fannie was very attractive, and Ben "a great mixer." The meals were elegant, and Miss Verner marveled at the delicious rolls made from "perpetual yeast." Perry had two pet dogs that always came to the table with him and lay beside his chair. He threw turkey to them from his carving fork. One day Ben, who dressed roughly and stayed in the fields, brought a countryman to dinner. When the visitor drank water from his finger bowl, Perry, to prevent his embarrassment, did the same.¹⁰

Other side lights on Perry's appearance and personality in later life are given in his autobiography and contemporaneous accounts. His health was unusually vigorous for his years, though slightly impaired after an operation in 1869. He wrote in 1874: "Since my illness four years ago, I have not been able to visit or go much into society, or even to church." But he still rode to town every morning in a two-horse buggy driven by a Negro servant and attended to his law practice. While Orr was presiding judge of the Western Circuit, Perry argued

⁹ *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, pp. 68-69.

¹⁰ Conversation of author with Mrs. Mattie Verner Stribling at Seneca, August 28, 1941.

many cases in court. But when an ignorant Radical, Thompson H. Cooke, was elected, he became disgusted. "I leave all our business for my son to manage in court," he wrote, "& I would almost as soon be confined in the Penitentiary a week as to spend it attending court." In later years he remained at his office only a few hours in the morning.¹¹

Of his physique a contemporary observed:

Governor Perry retains still much vigor of constitution, and his firm tread and elastic step would indicate that he is a much younger man than he really is. Of large and commanding person, with striking intellectuality of face, he readily impresses everyone as being far above the mediocrity of men, and one of nature's true noblemen.

Another, sketching his life in the *Sunny South* in 1875, wrote:

Governor Perry preserves the dignity and courtesy of manner always ascribed to him. He is remarkably familiar with his friends, and accessible to all. He is a capital talker, and at the same time a good listener. The stores of reading, observation and anecdotes which he possesses are freely dispensed, and embrace a wide range in science, literature and politics. . . .

A young country lad, sent by his father with a note to Perry on legal business, was greatly impressed with his kindness. "I entered his office and was received by him with as much civility and politeness as if I had been a man," he observed.

C. W. Dudley, an old friend and colleague of legislative days, visited Greenville in 1877. He wrote of Perry:

It is not saying too much when we venture the assertion that Greenville has been built up around him. That he is the great centre post of the industries and the educational advantages now so prominent in that city. . . . His law office, at the time we called, was like a crowded levee. After remaining there about an hour, en-

¹¹ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, September 22, 1869; Autobiography, 1874, pp. 109, 116, 178, 185, 189; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, February 14, 1877.

joying the luxury of conversation, such as the most intelligent people like to indulge in and to hear, we bowed ourselves out and retreated to make room for others.

We could not help thinking that Governor Perry was like a great beacon light in the State, attracting by his high character the eyes of the whole population, and inviting them to stand upon the same pedestal he had always occupied. . . .¹²

Perry's own analysis of his character in 1874 is interesting:

If I know my own heart, & can correctly judge of it, I feel that I love integrity justice & honor above all things. . . .

There is no concealment in my nature . . . I never could pursue a temporising course in public or private life. . . . If I had done so as others did, I could have gained honors & distinctions in the State, which my frank & independent course precluded me from ever aspiring to with hope of success.

I admit that I am self willed & obstinate. But I am always open to conviction, & ready to hear reason & argument. I never could suffer the opinion of others, no matter how great & good they were, to control my judgement, against my reason & sense of duty. . . . I do not think there is any hypocrisy in my nature. I cannot pretend to what I am not. If I dislike a man he is very apt to know it.

That same nature which makes me passionate & impulsive, renders me warm hearted & affectionate to my friends & the opposite to my enemies. I never pretend to friendship where I have none, or seek the company of those I do not like. . . .

I have a sort of philosophic mind which disposes me to make the best of everything & take the world easy. If misfortune overtakes me, I try not to shrink under it, but bear up with fortitude. I will not brood over the ills & misfortunes of life, but look to the future for better luck & better success. . . .

I have said that I was by nature passionate & resentful. But I do not bear malice. I am as ready and as quick to forgive as I am to resent an injury.

Persons who are not well acquainted with me have said that my bearing manners & appearance indicated that I was a proud man & this has lost me many votes in elections. I am sure that I never denied to anyone the courtesies of life. . . . It is true I have a great

¹² *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, pp. vii, 64-67; *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, August 11, 1875, September 12, 1877.

contempt for vanity & baseness, pretension & affectation. But I do love sincerity humility & modesty in man or woman. . . .¹³

Perry's attitude toward religion remained the same as in his younger days. He continued a "zealous friend and supporter" of Christ Episcopal Church, but never became a communicant. Occasionally his wife intimated that it would make her very happy for him to join the church. "I have invariably told her," Perry wrote in 1874, "that I was unworthy of such a position & a hypocrite I never could be. In private & in public life, I had never sailed under false colors. I might by my pretensions deceive my fellow beings, but I could not deceive my God." Greenville considered him a sincere believer in Christianity, for his conduct conformed to its teachings.¹⁴

II

After he laid down his duties as Provisional Governor, Perry devoted his leisure time to literary pursuits. He turned from the turbulence and corruption of the era to reflect upon nobler days of the past. In *The Land We Love*, a monthly magazine published in Charlotte, North Carolina, he wrote reminiscences of Calhoun, attributing to him pre-eminence above all other Carolinians of his time. In 1870 he wrote a series of "Reminiscences of Public Men" for the *Nineteenth Century*, a journal published at Charleston with a wide circulation over the South. Included were entertaining sketches of George McDuffie, Henry Middleton, Daniel Webster, Joel R. Poinsett, and Andrew Johnson.¹⁵

Perry was then importuned to write for the *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, and at intervals for the next twelve or fifteen years sent contributions. Some of the articles were a continuation of his "Reminiscences of Public Men," which gave anecdotal accounts, replete with humor, of Carolina jurists,

¹³ Autobiography, 1874, pp. 182-184.

¹⁴ Greenville News, December 4, 1886, quoted in *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, p. 13; W. H. C[ampbell], Charleston News and Courier, December 13 [1886], quoted in *ibid.*, p. 23; Autobiography, 1874, p. 180.

¹⁵ *The Land We Love*, VI (March, 1869), 397-403; Greenville Enterprise, March 2, 9, May 4, 1870.

politicians, and statesmen he had known—among them Rhett, Franklin J. Moses, Sr., Robert W. Barnwell, and Armistead Burt. Issues of 1877 and 1878 contained forty-four essays on "Eminent American Statesmen," discussing the lives and contributions of such national leaders as Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson, and such noted Carolinians as Henry Laurens and Charles Pinckney. In 1873 he wrote eight articles for the same journal on "The Provisional Governorship of South Carolina."¹⁶

Perry also gave interesting accounts of the Charleston convention of 1860, the New York convention of 1868, and various trips and experiences—including his old school days in Pendleton and Asheville. An article on the Greenville press traced its history from the *Greenville Republican* and *Ladies' Portfolio* to the *Greenville Daily News*, founded by A. M. Speights in 1874, the first daily newspaper in the up country and "one of the sprightliest and most spirited papers in the State." In 1880 he wrote sketches of two South Carolina Revolutionary heroes, Benjamin Cleveland and Benjamin Roebuck, for the King's Mountain Centennial Association. In 1881, after attending the Yorktown Centennial with his wife, he penned an interesting description for the *Enterprise and Mountaineer*. The editor had requested it, stating that circulation increased in the county when he wrote.¹⁷

Perry, in great demand as a speaker during these years, addressed a number of graduating classes, literary societies, lyceums, and public gatherings of various kinds. In 1875 he spoke to the graduating class at Charleston Medical College on a theme near to his heart—the past glory, the present degradation, and the future hope of South Carolina. He exhorted them not to cease hoping for a better day. "National misfortunes and calamities have befallen at some period, every people who have ever existed in the world," he said. "But courage, endurance and hope, have sustained them in the darkest hours

¹⁶ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, 1873-1884, *passim*. (Most of these articles have been reprinted in his published works.)

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, May 5-July 28, 1875, April 21, June 2, 1880, November 16, 1881.

of their misfortunes, and they have been redeemed and regenerated." Seven years later he continued the theme in an address to the graduates of Reidsville Female College in Spartanburg County. Now, he said, he could hold out "the most sanguine hopes" for the Palmetto State. "That black, lowering cloud which hovered over her horizon for eight long, terrible years, has been dispersed, and once more a bright, genial sun illumines her political firmament." Through the noble efforts of Hampton and a patriotic people a republican government had once more been established. The two great impediments to South Carolina's prosperity—emigration to the Southwest and slavery—had been removed. The future would be brighter than the past if the people took advantage of their natural resources. Climate, soil, minerals, and water power held out prospects for diversified agriculture, mining, stockraising, and manufactures.¹⁸

Perry was an enthusiastic member of the "Greenville Literary Club," which under the presidency of Dr. J. A. Broadus in 1867 had a membership of fifty. A series of eight lectures was arranged "to stimulate intellectual culture," for which gentlemen were charged one dollar and ladies admitted free. Perry spoke in July on "Reminiscences of Public Men," entertaining "a large and brilliant assembly" with accounts of four great South Carolinians: Calhoun, Daniel Huger, Langdon Cheves, and William C. Preston.¹⁹

In June, 1876, he delivered a lecture before the Cheraw Lyceum. Although it was a rainy evening, the large hall was filled to overflowing. Commending the members on their literary tastes, he expressed the hope that their example would be followed in all the towns and villages of the state. Literary clubs and the interchange of lectures would aid in restoring the "ancient honor and proud fame of the old Palmetto State." His discourse on "The Ancients and the Moderns: a Comparison" evinced the versatility of his knowledge.²⁰

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, March 17, 1875, July 5, 1882; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 362-379.

¹⁹ *Greenville Southern Enterprise*, April 16, May 16, July 11, 1867.

²⁰ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, June 21, 1876; reprinted in Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, pp. 217-241.

Perry declined most invitations to speak in later years, but because of interest and pride in his home town college, in which his sons had been educated, he consented to address the literary societies of Furman University in June, 1878. He spoke on the value of education, its general aspects, and the development of schools and colleges in South Carolina. Then he offered earnest advice:

Now, young gentlemen, as you are about entering on the great theatre of busy life, and I am passing off the stage of existence, I hope you will not take amiss a few words of counsel and advice from an old man who feels an interest in your prosperity, happiness and success in life. . . .

And first, I would impress on your minds that if you expect to succeed in your various pursuits, you must be industrious, moral, studious and honorable. Honor includes religion, patriotism and all the Christian virtues. . . .

. . . Genius, however brilliant, will not supersede the labor and drudgery of studying. . . .

Firmness is a great virtue, and you should cultivate it, early in life. It often prevents a man from being swerved from duty and honor. Indeed, without firmness there is no security in your moral rectitude. . . .

My advice to you is, to stick to your country and never leave the Old Palmetto State. Remain where you were born and brought up. Cherish the homes of your ancestors. . . .

It is well for you, gentlemen, that you will enter public life after this black, unnatural horror has passed over your beloved State, and the political horizon is bright and clear. I thank the Almighty in the honest sincerity of my heart, that I have lived to see it over, and that when I die, I shall have the consolation of knowing that my native State is once more under the government of her honored and honorable sons.²¹

Again for sentimental reasons he accepted the invitation of the Philophrenian Society of Walhalla Female College to address them at commencement the following year. It was hard to decline the request of the young ladies of his own native county, he wrote. On that occasion he began: "Oconee is 'my

²¹ Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 315-330.

own, my native land,' and her people, her mountains, her rivers, her magnificent scenery and her charming climate are all endeared to me, as my birthplace, with a thousand reminiscences of home, my childhood, and the graves of my parents and kindred." He then discoursed on the status of women in past ages and the improvement made in modern times. Education was as important for women as for men, he averred, since mothers had the responsibility of training their children.²²

When the Farmers' Society of Pendleton requested him as an "Honored Honorary Member" to deliver the oration at its sixty-ninth anniversary on October 9, 1884, Perry answered:

For the last four or five years I have refused all such invitations, and had resolved never to make another address before any society or at any public gathering. My age and infirmities seemed to justify this determination, but my anxiety to see "old Pendleton" once more, and meet my old friends there, and the children of such as have passed away, have induced me to violate my resolution and accept your kind invitation.

Your town was for many years the county seat of my native district—Pendleton—and I have always felt a peculiar interest in it, and affection for its people.

So Perry came home to old Pendleton to deliver his last public address. He discoursed on the latest agricultural methods, exhibiting "an intimate acquaintance with the practical management of the farm." Then he spoke eloquently of distinguished men of the past who had been members of the society, of the trials of the state, and of its redemption. Afterwards he spent several days in Oconee, visiting his old homestead on the Tugaloo, his brother Foster—reported by the *Walhalla Courier* as "one of our oldest and best citizens," and friends in Walhalla.²³

III

Perry, always striving to advance the interests of his beloved city, continued a public-spirited citizen until the day of

²² *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, July 23, 30, 1879, reprinted in Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 341-357.

²³ *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, September 24, October 22, December 3, 1884.

his death. In 1867, along with seven other delegates from Greenville, he attended a railroad meeting in Asheville called to decide the best route over the mountains to connect with Columbia, Charleston, and Augusta. With great force he argued the superiority of the Greenville route over the Spartanburg. In 1869 he took an active part in securing the Air-Line Railroad for Greenville, serving on a committee of five that raised \$200,000 for the project. The road ran from Atlanta via Greenville to Charlotte and connected there with the main line north. Five years later Perry thus estimated its benefits:

When the Air Line Railway was constructed through Greenville, it was supposed by many that the advantages to our town would be inconsiderable! But our population has doubled since that road was completed! Several hundred houses have been erected in the town. Cotton factories have been built, bringing here a capital of several hundred thousand dollars, and giving employment to four or five hundred persons! New stores have been opened by the dozen, and eight or ten store-houses lately erected would grace and be an ornament to any street in New York! Real estate has doubled and tripled in value!

In olden times our Greenville merchants used to get on their horses and ride to New York to purchase their goods. They were gone two or three months! And they sold their goods at a profit one to two hundred per cent! Now, they go by the Air Line Railroad to New York in thirty-five hours! They are never gone more than ten or fifteen days, and sell their goods at a profit from twelve to twenty-five per cent! . . .²⁴

The town had indeed experienced a remarkable growth. In 1873 the Camperdown Cotton Mill was erected; and the Piedmont, in 1876—presaging Greenville's later slogan, "The Textile Center of the South." The Air-Line Railroad increased the flow of summer visitors, and Greenville continued a popular resort. Census returns of 1880 showed its population 8,406 as compared with 3,135 in 1870.²⁵

²⁴ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, September 18, 25, October 2, 1867, May 12, December 8, 1869, June 22, 29, 1870; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, December 15, 1875.

²⁵ Greenville *News*, Fiftieth Anniversary edition, December 30, 1923; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, October 22, 1873, July 7, 1875, July 14, 1880.

Perry was interested in the cultural as well as material improvement of his city and entered enthusiastically into the plan for promoting public education through the aid of the Peabody fund. He presided at the meeting in March, 1868, which voted to raise the necessary subscription, and assisted in establishing primary and academic schools. When in 1880 agitation arose to tear down the old courthouse—the most classic and beautiful building in Greenville—for the sake of “progress and improvement,” Perry entered an indignant protest in the local papers. “It would be the *progress* of a crawfish—*backwards*, and the *improvement* of a *vandal destruction*,” he wrote.²⁶

Though declining to run for public office in his later years, Perry remained active in politics, ever ready to forward with voice and pen the interests of his party. In 1878 he was a delegate to the Greenville Democratic county convention which endorsed Hampton for re-election. When Martin W. Gary attempted to win the Democratic nomination for governor in 1880 as “the poor man’s friend,” Perry championed the cause of Johnson Hagood, Hampton’s candidate, who was unanimously nominated by the state convention. Gary had long headed the disaffected element within the party, many of whom now joined the Greenbackers or Independents in support of L. W. R. Blair for governor. Seeing an opportunity of defeating the Democrats, the Republicans united with these groups and made capital of the unpopular stock law of 1877, which they denounced as oppressive to the poor.²⁷

Perry wrote a letter to the Greenville *Daily News* in August exposing the designs of the Radicals and calling upon “every true Democrat and every honorable man” to “rise up in the majesty of his strength” and defeat them.²⁸ In September and October he published a series of articles on “The Radical Frauds” in the *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, contrasting the orgy of corruption and extravagance of the Radical regime

²⁶ Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, March 25, 1868, April 28, 1869; Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, January 21, February 4, 1880.

²⁷ Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, July 24, August 7, 21, September 18, 25, November 6, 13, 1878; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 328-330.

²⁸ Quoted in New York *Daily Tribune*, September 1, 1880.

in South Carolina with the honesty and economy of the Democrats. He concluded:

Can any honest man wish to see these rogues and thieves in power again in South Carolina? Can any man be such a fool as to vote the Radical ticket with this wholesale robbery before him because he is opposed to the stock law? Can any Greenbacker be so deluded as to unite with Radicals, thieves and plunderers and assist them in getting into power again instead of voting with the Democratic party, which party is in favor of greenbacks, gold and silver as money? The Republican party wish nothing to be called money and a legal tender but gold. If they get into power they will demonetize silver once more, and withdraw the legal tender property of Greenbacks. . . . When the return of such ruin and infamy awaits us can any one neglect to go and vote the Democratic ticket at the ensuing election? . . .²⁹

When the gubernatorial campaign opened in Greenville on September 13, mounted Red Shirts escorted the speakers to Boyce lawn, where a flower-strewn stand had been erected. When Perry advanced to the front to make the welcoming address, "his presence instinctively drew forth the plaudits and cheers of the multitude." He described the "infamous" government of four years earlier, the redemption under Hampton, and the peace and happiness of South Carolina since. "Now, these rogues and thieves are most adroitly endeavoring to get possession of the State government once more!" he warned. "Their success would be the utter ruin and desolation of the country." He praised the Democratic nominee for President, W. S. Hancock, and then introduced "the brave, unsullied" Hagood.³⁰

In mid-October Perry heard that numbers of ignorant whites and blacks in Greenville were being tricked into joining the Greenbackers. He wrote a letter in the local paper, warning them against uniting with the Republicans, who, though claiming to be the workingman's friends, were the rich man's gold-currency party all over the United States. On

²⁹ September 22, 29, October 6, 1880.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, September 15, 1880.

October 29 he spoke at another great Democratic rally in Greenville, where, despite the cold rain, 1,000 or 1,500 Red Shirts paraded to the cry "Hurrah for Hancock!" On November 2 the Democrats flocked to the polls, electing every nominee in Greenville County by a majority of more than 2,000. The party triumphed throughout the state, defeating the Greenback gubernatorial candidate by a vote of 117,432 to 4,227.³¹

Perry wrote a letter to the *Enterprise and Mountaineer* rejoicing over the results, but deploring Democratic defeat in the national election. He saw in the victory of Garfield a continuation of Republican corruption, and challenged Southern Democrats: "We must cling to the Northern democracy and prepare for another battle with them for the continuance and salvation of the Republic." When party politicians became disconsolate, he promised: "Let the great and patriotic Democratic party of the United States stand *fast* by their *principles* and they will achieve success *four* years hence. Four years more of Republican rule will bring the American people to their senses."³²

He lived to see his prophecy fulfilled in the election of Cleveland—confident now that the Republic was once again safe in the hands of the Democratic party. And his son Willie was overwhelmingly chosen to uphold its principles in Congress. Recompense for his own thwarted ambition! Perry's last political act was to cast his vote in the Paris Mountain Democratic club for renomination of Willie on November 2, 1886.³³

IV

Five days later he was attacked with vertigo as he was ascending the stairway at Sans Souci, and the doctor pronounced

³¹ *Ibid.*, October 13, November 3, 10, 1880; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, III, 325.

³² Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, November 10, 1880; "Joining the Republican Party," *ibid.*, December 15, 1880, reprinted in Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 358-361. (Date of letter is erroneously given in latter.)

³³ Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, November 19, 1884; *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, p. 61.

it valvular disease of the heart. Though rallying after a few days, he suffered another attack on November 27 and was prostrated until his death on December 3. His funeral was held in Christ Episcopal Church, by his request "in as simple and unostentatious a manner as possible," and his remains laid to rest in the churchyard beside his children. Though the weather was cold and disagreeable, a great crowd came to pay its respects. The Reverend Ellison Capers read the service and wrote afterwards to Hext: "I am satisfied that the long, manly, true life of your father was closed at last by a sincere surrender of his soul into the gracious hands of our merciful Saviour, and that his end was peace."³⁴

Obituaries in the press attest the universal esteem in which he was held by the citizens of the state. A. B. Williams wrote editorially in the Greenville *Daily News*:

One of the biggest and strongest men this country has known died here on Friday. He was cast in a big mold, morally, intellectually and physically. . . .

Governor Perry was sometimes spoken of by his admirers as "the old Roman," and surely he deserved the title by virtue of the qualities ascribed to the Romans in the best days of the republic. . . . Courage, tenacity of purpose, force of character and rigid adherence to principle marked his course through all the years of his manhood. As the youth began the old man ended. The path of his duty and his conscience led straight across the popular way. But the fury of the people, the seductions of friends, the promises of ambition, the overwhelming power of opponents combined against him failed to cause the swerving of a step. . . .

Years and events approved his judgment and his principles, but they were not needed to win him honor. His thirty years of hopeless fighting was honor and triumph enough because it was evidence that could not be questioned that he believed in his cause and had in him the manhood, strength and devotion that constitute heroism.

The Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer* voiced the devotion of his fellow-townsmen:

³⁴ Greenville *Daily News*, December 4, 1886; *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 22, 29.

He was a remarkable man in many respects. He was distinguished for the great purity of his character, his profound knowledge of law, his undying devotion to principle, and for a studiousness that remained with him to the day of his death.

In his death the State and Union have lost a citizen of which each might justly feel great pride. The people of Greenville almost idolized him, and he has controlled their public sentiment for more than half a century, and there is no one of equal character and abilities to take his place.

The Charleston *News and Courier* gives evidence that even the low country recognized his pre-eminence:

Governor Perry was a grand figure in South Carolina affairs, a Romanesque rock standing out boldly in the midst of the troubled sea of politics. . . . Unquestionably he was the head and front and chieftain of the Union sentiment in South Carolina. . . .

Governor Perry opposed secession, first and last and all the while. But, honest Carolinian as he was, he was with his people, heart and soul, when the die was cast, and South Carolina had withdrawn from the sisterhood of States. . . .

Some measure of reward came to him when the struggle was over, as by reason of his noble record he was appointed governor of the State. Superbly he discharged the difficult duties that were imposed upon him in that time of transition and adjustment. . . .

Statesman, jurist, and man of letters and patriot, unflinching in his loyalty to these United States, and immovable in his devotion to the Commonwealth of South Carolina, Governor Perry was in many respects without peer in our public life, and in nothing that was worthy and of good report had he any superior.³⁵

From the capital came a hearty tribute:

. . . The deceased was a remarkable man from many points of view. For many years the consistent, outspoken, courageous defender of Union doctrines in opposition to all the declared principles of his native State, he never flinched from the advocacy of his opinions whatever the majority against him. He was opposed to secession from first to last, but when his State acted he surrendered his life-long convictions to her commands. We sincerely believe

³⁵ Reprinted in *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 14-18.

that there was no more conscientious and patriotic citizen in all the State than he who now has been gathered to the fold of Carolina's great sons as they sleep beneath her soil.

The deceased for many years represented the district of Greenville in the State assembly, and he was always recognized as a most conspicuous member. His opinions were always earnestly and frankly expressed. He took a bold stand on every public measure and squarely toed the mark in every position of his long life.

Such was the declared character of the man in all things that he was highly respected by those who opposed his views no less than by those who followed his lead.

. . . As provisional governor, Governor Perry earnestly advocated a policy of magnanimous peace. . . . He stood by his State as faithfully in the dire moment of her downfall as he had manfully resisted the temper and policies which had led up to the war. . . .

Ex-Governor Perry's memory, then, will long be cherished by all who love and admire true manhood in its highest sense, whether it be in friend or foe. And Greenville will lovingly cherish the memory of her great son as one of the most remarkable men the State has ever given birth to.

The father of an honored family, among whom is the representative in congress from this district, the Hon. Wm. Perry, the deceased goes to rest without an enemy in the State, though it was long opposed to his political opinions. . . .³⁶

In delineating Perry's character, journalists over the state were in close accord. Purity, scrupulous integrity, courage, Roman firmness, devotion to duty, candor, magnanimity, and patriotism were the traits that caught the public eye.³⁷ Friends confirm these impressions. James P. Boyce, his Unionist colleague of Greenville in the stirring prewar days, asserted:

I esteem it one of my greatest privileges of life to have enjoyed his friendship and confidence. . . . He was one of the very few who could handle the pitch of political life and not be defiled. I thank God for the example given in him of one so pure and true a man.³⁸

³⁶ Columbia Register, reprinted in *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 16-17.

³⁷ Exchanges quoted in *Greenville Enterprise and Mountaineer*, December 22, 1866; *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 12-23.

³⁸ James P. Boyce to Mrs. Perry, March 28, 1887, in *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, p. 73; Perry, *Biographical Sketches*, p. 605.

The son of Perry Duncan wrote Mrs. Perry:

I have heard from my earliest recollection, my father recite your noble husband's many virtues; tell of his incorruptible and stainless life and character; of his sublime moral and physical courage under the most exacting and difficult circumstances, in which he had been his closest and most confidential friend.

James C. Furman, Perry's bitter Secessionist opponent in Greenville, expressed his admiration of Perry's "invincible firmness and fearlessness," and "magnanimity which could see and acknowledge the merits of those to whom he stood opposed." George F. Townes, one of Perry's most cherished friends despite their stormy controversy of 1854, stressed this same magnanimity—Perry's readiness to forgive.³⁹

Wade Hampton wrote to express his "profound admiration" for Perry's character, "which commanded respect from his opponents and admiration and affection from his friends." Political adversaries of ante bellum days substantiate Hampton's statement. A. P. Aldrich, ardent Secessionist, wrote Mrs. Perry: "We mourn together. Your devoted and noble husband, my life-long friend." M. L. Bonham taught his son to look up to Perry "with reverence and respect." R. Dozier of Georgetown stated: "Differing with him frequently in his political views, there was no man in the councils of our State for whom I entertained a higher personal regard."⁴⁰

Other gentler characteristics of Perry's nature—kindness, generosity, tenderness, courtesy, geniality, and loyalty—are revealed in letters from his friends. W. H. Campbell, who came to Greenville in 1850 to edit the Secessionist *Mountaineer*, tells how "kindly and hospitably" he was received by Perry; how pleasantly he was impressed with the latter's "dignity, courtesy and noble presence"; how, through Perry's magnanimity, their friendship survived sharp political controversy. Then Campbell moved away, but returned years later to bring back the remains of his children. Perry's sympathizing nature brought

³⁹ *Letters Acknowledging "Letters to Wife,"* pp. 15, 31, 105.

⁴⁰ *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 33, 35, 38, 85; Perry, *Reminiscences* (1889), pp. 335-336.

him to call, though he was quite unwell at the time. Edward Croft, a lawyer friend of Greenville, writes:

To the world Governor Perry perhaps appeared stern and reserved, but I know from an instance in my own family affairs that he was most generous and tender hearted. So much so, that I found until then I had never known or understood his true character, worth and gentleness. . . .

Julius H. Heyward, junior law partner of Perry and his son in latter years, tells of Perry's kindness and generosity towards younger members of the profession:

. . . I came to Greenville a stranger to the entire community . . . he knew nothing of me except that I was a beginner at the bar, without experience and without a practice. But this was all he desired to know. His hand was frankly extended, and his advice and assistance ever at my disposal. In the moment of success, he had always a kindly smile and grasp of the hand in congratulation; in the hour of difficulty, a brave, cheery word of encouragement.⁴¹

A week after Perry's death the members of the Greenville bar met to pay him tribute. George F. Townes was elected chairman and spoke eloquently of his character and ability, "not only as a lawyer, but as a man, a citizen, public servant and true patriot." "As age advanced," he asserted, "he gathered more and more troops of friends, and has died without an enemy in either of the old political parties, now happily merged in one." Resolutions were adopted eulogizing Perry as "a learned, able and fearless advocate, who by his integrity and great ability justly occupied a commanding position among the most distinguished lawyers of the State." Other colleagues spoke of his pre-eminence. C. M. Furman said: "You all know the man. He stood amongst us like some grand old oak, erect, with wide spreading boughs, conspicuous to all observers. And now, that he has fallen, we feel as never before the largeness of the space he filled."⁴²

Townes presented the resolutions to the presiding judge at

⁴¹ *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 27, 58-59, 76.

⁴² "Proceedings of the Greenville Bar," December 11, 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 45-52.

the opening of the next circuit court in Greenville, with a motion for adjournment in Perry's memory. Lawyers rose to second the motion. John R. Bellinger stated:

. . . Governor Perry for fifty-nine years adorned the profession of which he was at once an ornament and a shining light. . . . Always studious, ever ready and fully prepared in his cases, he took advantage of no technicalities which the justice of his cause and the rights of his client did not demand that he should act upon. Truth was his guiding star. . . .

M. F. Ansel, who had come from Walhalla to settle in Greenville in 1876, spoke of the esteem in which Perry was held by the people of the county and state. J. A. Mooney, who had been prepared for the bar by Perry and his son, asserted:

. . . Governor Perry was my friend, in the truest meaning of friend, and I cannot allow this occasion to pass without adding my little tribute to the memory of the great man who has fallen among us. . . .

And now, my young brethren, we who are standing upon the threshold of the legal profession, we have an example in Governor Perry that it will be well for us to emulate. Let's take him as our model, and strive hard to attain to the high plane that he reached. Could we all succeed, what a bar, what a *country* we would have.⁴³

The South Carolina legislature also paid tribute to Perry. On the day after his death, M. F. Ansel, representative from Greenville, moved that the House adjourn in memory of one who had rendered such long and distinguished service to the state. Mr. Brawley of Charleston, representing a constituency once diametrically opposed to Perry's views, expressed its "profound respect" for his character and memory. John C. Haskell stated that he would ill represent the city of Columbia and Richland County if he did not join in his praise:

. . . Anyone can oppose, but it is of few, even in history, that it can be said that they openly, constantly and defiantly opposed the enthusiastic will of a great majority of their fellow-citizens, without

⁴³ "Proceedings in the Court of Common Pleas," April 6, 1887, *ibid.*, pp. 53-60; conversation of author with Martin F. Ansel, June 28, 1941.

ever losing at any time their respect and confidence. Yet none will deny that this can be truly said of him who[m] we now seek to honor. . . .⁴⁴

John P. Thomas, battle companion of Perry during the "critical period of Democratic resurrection and Anglo-Saxon self-assertion," 1868-1876, wrote in the Columbia *Daily Record*:

. . . Governor Perry—no more for conscience' sake estranged from brother South Carolinians—was with us and of us—the swift current of his political sympathies mingling with ours and flowing freely in the new channel of the State's *post-bellum* Democracy. . . .

. . . So it came to pass that, old feuds forgotten and his warfare ended, Benjamin Franklin Perry, of Roman mould and Christian impress, passed away esteemed and admired in a great State whose creed political he was wont to combat and whose public policy he had resolutely resisted.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *In Memoriam B. F. Perry*, pp. 39-44.

⁴⁵ *Tribute to Benjamin F. Perry*, pp. 6-7.

Bibliography

PRIMARY MATERIALS

Manuscripts

Allston-Pringle-Hill Collection, 1812-1929 (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina). Contains typed copies of Petigru letters, 1812-1863.

Armistead Burt Papers, 1825-1890 (Duke University). A collection of 5,639 items, containing much political correspondence.

Charles A. David Scrapbook (in possession of Mr. Louis David of Greenville, S. C.). Mostly newspaper clippings of David's reminiscences of early Greenville.

Franklin H. Elmore Papers, 1839-1850 (Library of Congress).

Grant Books, 1785-1798 (Office of South Carolina Secretary of State).

James H. Hammond Papers, 1763-1875 (Library of Congress).

Andrew Johnson Papers (Library of Congress).

Francis Lieber Papers (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina). A small collection of letters to Lieber.

McCarter, Journal Kept at the South, 1860-1866 (Library of Congress). Evidently by a Charleston merchant, giving interesting side lights on South Carolina politics.

A. G. Magrath Papers (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina). About 50 letters during Magrath's governorship and later confinement at Fort Pulaski.

William Porcher Miles Papers, 1782-1907 (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina). An important collection of correspondence from prominent South Carolinians, containing 3,263 items.

Benjamin F. Perry, Autobiographies (in possession of Mrs. Hugh C. Haynsworth, Sumter, S. C.). Very full and interesting ac-

- counts of Perry's life written in 1849 and 1874—the first for his eldest son and the second for his grandson.
- Benjamin F. Perry, *Journal*, 1832-1863, 2 vols. (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina). A valuable and candid record of Perry's activities and intimate thoughts, written at irregular intervals varying from a few days to two years.
- Benjamin F. Perry Scrapbook, 2 vols. (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina). Mostly undated newspaper clippings of Perry's public letters and speeches. The author has located most of these and cited them from the newspapers.
- Benjamin F. Perry Papers, 1822-1886 (Alabama State Department of Archives and History). A very valuable collection of over 2,000 items, containing 7 volumes of letters to Perry from outstanding public men in South Carolina—especially from Unionist friends. Also MS speeches, ledgers, lawyers' casebooks, etc.
- Benjamin F. Perry Papers (in possession of Mrs. Sam Rice Baker, Montgomery, Ala.). Two volumes of private letters, including many from intimate friends on political topics, and a large collection from his eldest son during the Civil War.
- Mrs. Benjamin F. Perry, *Extracts from Perry Journal* (in possession of Mrs. Sam Rice Baker). A copy of portions of Perry's Journal with comments and explanations made by his wife in 1888.
- James L. Petigru Papers, 1826-1868 (Library of Congress). Little correspondence of value.
- Francis W. Pickens and Milledge L. Bonham Papers, 1860-1864 (Library of Congress). Contains 405 pieces, mostly official papers relating to the Civil War.
- Joel R. Poinsett Papers (Pennsylvania Historical Society).
- Henry W. Ravenel, *Private Journal*, 1859-1883, 11 vols. (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina). A diary valuable for its reflections by a famous scientist on the social and political life of the state.
- Edmund Ruffin, *Diary*, 1859-1865 (Library of Congress).
- William H. Seward Correspondence, Department of State Papers (National Archives).
- Townes Family Papers, 1829-1850 (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina). Several thousand letters from members of a prominent family of Greenville, South Carolina, to each other—most of them to G. F. Townes.
- William H. Trescot Papers, 1851-1867 (Library of Congress).

Beaufort T. Watts Papers, 1825-1863 (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina). A valuable collection of letters and documents addressed to Watts while secretary to the governors, 1834-1861.

Daniel Webster Papers (Library of Congress).

Williams-Chesnut-Manning Papers, 1714-1885 (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina). A large collection of letters from men prominent in the Civil War period.

Official Records and Documents

Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1836-1865.

Congressional Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., Part I.

Journals of the Conventions of the People of South Carolina, held in 1832, 1833, and 1852. Columbia: R. W. Gibbes, 1860.

Journal of the State Convention of South Carolina, together with the Resolutions and Ordinances. Columbia: R. W. Gibbes, 1852.

Journal of the Convention of the People of South Carolina, held in 1860-61. Charleston: Evans and Cogswell, 1861.

Journal of the Convention of the People of South Carolina, held in 1860, 1861 and 1862 together with the Ordinances, Reports, Resolutions, etc. Columbia: R. W. Gibbes, 1862.

Journal of the Convention of the People of South Carolina, held in Columbia, S. C., September, 1865, together with the Ordinances, Reports, Resolutions, etc. Columbia: J. A. Selby, 1865.

Journals of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina. Columbia: State Printer, 1836-1865.

Journals of the Senate of the State of South Carolina. Columbia: State Printer, 1836-1865.

Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention, held in 1860, at Charleston and Baltimore. Cleveland: Plain Dealer Job Office, 1860.

Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention of South Carolina, at Columbia, 5th and 6th of May, 1856, for the purpose of electing delegates to the Democratic National Convention, to meet in Cincinnati in June. Columbia: R. W. Gibbes, 1856.

Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention of South Carolina, held at Columbia on the 16th and 17th of April, 1860, for the purpose of electing delegates to the Democratic National Convention, to meet in Charleston 23rd April. Columbia: R. W. Gibbes, 1860.

Proceedings of the Conventions at Charleston and Baltimore. Published by Order of the National Democratic Convention . . . and under the Supervision of the National Democratic Executive Committee. Washington, 1860.

Proceedings of the State Convention held at Columbia, S. C., May 30-31, 1860. Columbia: Southern Guardian Steam Press, 1860.

Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina. Columbia: State Printer, 1836-1865.

Report of the Committee of the Convention of the Union and State Rights Party, Assembled at Columbia, 10th December, 1832 with their Remonstrance and Protest. N.p., n.d., pamphlet.

Richardson, James D. *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents 1789-1897*, 10 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896-1899.

Statement of the Proceedings of the Convention of the National Democratic Party held in Charleston, in April, 1860, that led to the withdrawal of certain delegations, and Proceedings of the Delegates that Withdrew. Charleston: James & Williams, 1860.

The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vols. XI-XIII. Columbia: State Printer, 1873-1875.

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 130 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.

Correspondence, Diaries, Memoirs, etc.

ANDREWS, SIDNEY. *The South since the War: As Shown by Fourteen Weeks of Travel and Observation in Georgia and the Carolinas.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866.

CHESNUT, MARY B. *A Diary from Dixie.* New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1906.

CRALLÉ, RICHARD K. (ed.). *Reports and Public Letters of John C. Calhoun.* New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1857.

FOOTE, HENRY S. *Casket of Reminiscences.* Washington: Chronicle Publishing Co., 1874.

———. *War of the Rebellion: or, Scylla and Charybdis.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866.

GRAYSON, WILLIAM J. "Autobiography," edited from original MS with introduction by Robert Duncan Bass (Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1933).

- HALSTEAD, MURAT (comp.). *Caucuses of 1860: A History of the National Political Conventions of the Current Presidential Campaign*. Columbus: Follett, Foster & Co., 1860.
- HAMMOND, JAMES H. *Selections from the Letters and Speeches of the Hon. James H. Hammond of South Carolina*. New York: J. F. Trow Company, 1866.
- HOOKE, EDWARD. "Diary of Edward Hooker, 1805-1808," *American Historical Association Report*, 1896, I, 842-929.
- In Memoriam Benjamin Franklin Perry: Ex-Governor of South Carolina*. Greenville, S. C.: Greenville Daily News Presses, 1887.
- In Memoriam William Hayne Perry*. N.p., n.d., Alabama State Department of Archives and History.
- JAMESON, J. FRANKLIN (ed.). "The Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *American Historical Association Report*, 1889, II.
- LATHERS, RICHARD. *Reminiscences of Richard Lathers: Sixty Years of a Busy Life in South Carolina, Massachusetts and New York*, edited by Alvan F. Sanborn. New York: The Grafton Press, 1907.
- LE CONTE, JOSEPH. *The Autobiography of Joseph Le Conte*, edited by William D. Armes. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1903.
- LELAND, JOHN A. *A Voice from South Carolina: Twelve Chapters before Hampton, Two Chapters after Hampton, with a Journal of a Reputed Ku-Klux, and an Appendix*. Charleston: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1879.
- Memorial of the Late James L. Petigru: Proceedings of the Bar of Charleston, S. C., March 25, 1863*. New York: Richardson & Co., 1866.
- Perry Pamphlets, 44 vols. (Alabama State Department of Archives and History). Writings and speeches of Perry and many other prominent Carolinians; also reports of public meetings. A very valuable collection of contemporary South Carolina material.
- PERRY, BENJAMIN F. *Biographical Sketches of Eminent American Statesmen, with Speeches, Addresses, and Letters by Ex-Gov. B. F. Perry*. Philadelphia: The Ferree Press, 1887.
- . *Reminiscences of Public Men*. Philadelphia: John D. Avil & Co., 1883.
- . *Reminiscences of Public Men with Speeches and Addresses*, Second Series. Greenville, S. C.: Shannon & Co., 1889.

- PERRY, MRS. B. F. (ed.) *Letters Acknowledging Receipt of "Gov. Benjamin Franklin Perry's Letters to his Wife."* Greenville, S. C.: Shannon & Co., 1891.
- (ed.). *Letters of Gov. Benjamin Franklin Perry to his Wife*, Second Series. Greenville, S. C.: Shannon & Co., 1890.
- (ed.). *Tribute to Benjamin Franklin Perry, Ex-Governor of South Carolina*. Greenville, S. C.: Shannon & Co., 1888.
- PERRY, HEXT M. (ed.). *Letters of My Father to My Mother, Beginning With Those Written During Their Engagement, with Extracts from his Journals*. Philadelphia: Avil Printing Co., 1889.
- PHILLIPS, ULRICH B. (ed.). "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," *American Historical Association Report*, 1911, II.
- PIKE, JAMES S. *The Prostrate State: South Carolina under Negro Government*. New York: Loring & Mussey, 1935.
- PORTER, A. TOOMER. *Led On! Step by Step: Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South 1828-1898: An Autobiography*. New York & London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898.
- SCHURZ, CARL. *Reminiscences*, 3 vols. New York: McClure Co., 1908.
- SCOTT, EDWIN J. *Random Recollections of a Long Life, 1806 to 1876*. Columbia: C. A. Calvo, 1884.
- SELBY, JULIAN A. *Memorabilia and Anecdotal Reminiscences of Columbia, S. C., and Incidents Connected Therewith*. Columbia: R. L. Bryan Co., 1905.
- SMYTH, J. F. D. *A Tour in the United States of America*, 2 vols. London: G. Robinson; J. Robson; J. Sewell, 1784.

Newspapers

- Anderson Gazette*, 1845.
- Camden Weekly Journal*, 1850-1860, 1864-1867.
- Camden Tri-Weekly Journal*, 1865.
- Columbia Daily Phoenix*, 1865-1874.
- Columbia Daily Telegraph*, 1849-1851.
- Columbia Tri-Weekly South Carolinian*, 1850-1851.
- Columbia State*, special issues, 1906, 1925.
- Charleston Daily Courier*, 1831, 1851-1867.
- Charleston Daily News*, 1865, 1867.

- Charleston *Mercury*, 1845-1867.
 Greenville *Daily News*, special issues, 1882, 1886, 1923.
 Greenville *Enterprise*, 1870-1872.
 Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, 1873-1886.
 Greenville *Mountaineer*, 1829-1850.
 Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, 1856-1857.
 Greenville *Republican*, 1826-1827.
 Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, 1854-1861, 1863, 1867-1869.
 Greenville *Southern Patriot*, 1851-1855.
 Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, August 4, 1832.
 Keowee *Courier* (Pickens C. H.), 1858, 1860-1861, 1865-1867.
 Lancaster *Ledger*, 1858-1861.
 New York *Daily Tribune*, 1850-1860, 1866, 1880.
 New York *Evening Post*, 1860.
 New York *Herald*, 1860.
 New York *Semi-Weekly Tribune*, 1865-1866.
 Orangeburg *Southron*, 1860.
 Pendleton *Messenger*, 1831-1832.
 Spartanburg *Express*, 1860-1862.
 Sumter *Watchman*, 1856-1860, 1863, 1865-1866.
 Yorkville *Enquirer*, 1860.
 Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, 1865.

SECONDARY MATERIALS

General Works and Special Studies

- ALLEN, WALTER. *Governor Chamberlain's Administration in South Carolina: A Chapter of Reconstruction in the Southern States*. New York & London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1888.
 BANCROFT, FREDERIC. *Calhoun and the South Carolina Nullification Movement*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928.
 BOUCHER, CHAUNCEY S. *The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916.
 ———. "The Secession and Co-operation Movements in South Carolina, 1848 to 1852," *Washington University Studies*, Vol. V, No. 2.
 ———. "South Carolina and the South on the Eve of Secession, 1852 to 1860," *Washington University Studies*, Humanistic Series, Vol. VI, No. 2.

- . "Sectionalism, Representation and the Electoral Question in Ante-Bellum South Carolina," *Washington University Studies*, Vol. IV, Part II, No. 1.
- CARPENTER, J. T. *The South as a Conscious Minority 1789-1861: A Study in Political Thought*. New York: New York University Press, 1930.
- CAUTHEN, CHARLES E. "Secession and Civil War in South Carolina" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1937).
- COLE, ARTHUR C. *The Irrepressible Conflict, 1850-1865*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1934.
- . *The Whig Party in the South*. Washington: American Historical Association, 1913.
- COULTER, E. MERTON (ed.). *The Course of the South to Secession: An Interpretation by Ulrich Bonnell Phillips*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939.
- CRAVEN, AVERY. *The Coming of the Civil War*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942.
- CRITTENDEN, S. S. *The Greenville Century Book Comprising an account of the first settlement of the County, and the founding of the City of Greenville, S. C.* Greenville: Greenville News Press, 1903.
- DENMAN, C. P. *The Secession Movement in Alabama*. Montgomery: Alabama State Department of Archives and History, 1933.
- DERRICK, SAMUEL M. *Centennial History of South Carolina Railroad*. Columbia: The State Co., 1930.
- DUMOND, DWIGHT L. *The Secession Movement 1860-1861*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1931.
- FLEMING, WALTER L. *Documentary History of Reconstruction, Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational and Industrial, 1865 to the Present Time*, 2 vols. Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1906.
- . *The Sequel to Appomattox: A Chronicle of the Reunion of the States*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921.
- HAMER, PHILIP M. *The Secession Movement in South Carolina, 1847-1852*. Allentown, Penn.: H. R. Haas & Co., 1918.
- HARPER, WILLIAM, *et al.* *The Pro-slavery Argument*. Charleston: Walker, Richards & Co., 1852.
- HEARON, CLEO. *Mississippi and the Compromise of 1850*, reprint from *Mississippi Historical Society Publications*, XIV (1914), 7-229.

- HENNIG, HELEN KOHN (ed.). *Columbia: Capital City of South Carolina 1786-1936*. Columbia: R. L. Bryan Co., 1936.
- HENRY, ROBERT SELPH. *The Story of Reconstruction*. Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1938.
- HOUSTON, DAVID F. *A Critical Study of Nullification in South Carolina*. New York: Longmans Green & Co., 1896.
- JENKINS, WILLIAM S. *Pro-slavery Thought in the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935.
- KING, WILLIAM L. *The Newspaper Press of Charleston, S. C.* Charleston: E. Perry, 1872.
- LOGAN, JOHN H. *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina from the Earliest Periods to the Close of the War of Independence*. Charleston: Walker, Evans & Co., 1859.
- MERIWETHER, ROBERT L. *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765*. Kingsport, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Co., 1940.
- MILLS, ROBERT G. *Atlas of the State of South Carolina*. Baltimore: F. Lucas, 1825.
- . *Statistics of South Carolina*. Charleston: Hurlbut and Lloyd, 1826.
- MILTON, GEORGE FORT. *Abraham Lincoln and the Fifth Column*. New York: The Vanguard Press, 1942.
- MORSE, ABNER. *A Genealogical Register of the Inhabitants and History of the Towns of Sherborn and Holliston*. Boston: Dammrell & Moore, 1856.
- PARRINGTON, VERNON L. *Main Currents of American Thought*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1930.
- PERRY, AARON FYFE. *Memoranda concerning Descendants of John Perry, John Strong, John Fyfe, Robert Gray*. Cincinnati, 1878.
- PHILLIPS, ULRICH B. "The Literary Movement for Secession," *Studies in Southern History and Politics*, pp. 33-60. New York: Columbia University Press, 1914.
- . *A History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt to 1860*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1908.
- . "Georgia and State Rights . . .," *American Historical Association Report*, 1901, II.
- RAINWATER, PERCY LEE. *Mississippi: Storm Center of Secession 1856-1861*. Baton Rouge: Otto Claiborne, 1938.
- RANDALL, J. G. *The Civil War and Reconstruction*. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1937.

- REYNOLDS, JOHN S. *Reconstruction in South Carolina 1865-1877*. Columbia: The State Co., 1905.
- RICHARDSON, JAMES M. *History of Greenville County, South Carolina, Narrative and Biographical*. Atlanta: A. H. Cawston, 1930.
- SALLEY, A. S. (comp.). *South Carolina Troops in Confederate Service*, 3 vols. Columbia: R. L. Bryan Co., 1913.
- SCHAPER, WILLIAM A. "Sectionalism and Representation in South Carolina," *American Historical Association Report*, 1900, I.
- SHEPPARD, WILLIAM A. *Red Shirts Remembered: Southern Brigadiers of the Reconstruction Period*. Atlanta: Ruralist Press, 1940.
- SHRYOCK, RICHARD H. *Georgia and the Union in 1850*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1926.
- SIMKINS, FRANCIS B., AND WOODY, ROBERT H. *South Carolina during Reconstruction*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1932.
- SIMPSON, R. W. *History of Old Pendleton District with a Genealogy of the Leading Families of the District*. Anderson: Oulla Printing Co., 1913.
- SITTERSON, JOSEPH C. *The Secession Movement in North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939.
- SNOWDEN, YATES (ed.). *History of South Carolina*, 5 vols. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1920.
- THOMPSON, HENRY T. *Ousting the Carpetbagger from South Carolina*. Columbia: R. L. Bryan Co., 1927.
- VAN DEUSEN, JOHN G. *Economic Bases of Disunion in South Carolina*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1928.
- WALLACE, DAVID D. *The History of South Carolina*, 4 vols. New York: American Historical Society, 1934.
- WEBSTER, LAURA J. "The Operation of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina," *Smith College Studies in History*, Vol. I, No. 2 (January, 1916), pp. 67-118.
- WILLIAMS, ALFRED B. *Hampton and his Red Shirts: South Carolina's Deliverance in 1876*. Charleston: Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., 1935.
- WOLFE, JOHN H. *Jeffersonian Democracy in South Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940.

Biographies

- BROADUS, JOHN A. *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce, D.D., L.L.D., Late President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.* New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1893.
- BROOKS, U. R. *South Carolina Bench and Bar.* Columbia: The State Co., 1908.
- CAPERS, HENRY D. *The Life and Times of C. G. Memminger.* Richmond: Everett Waddey Co., 1893.
- CARSON, JAMES P. *Life, Letters and Speeches of James Louis Petigru, the Union Man of South Carolina.* Washington: W. H. Lowdermilk & Co., 1920.
- CLAIBORNE, J. F. H. *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman: Major-General, U.S.A., and Governor of the State of Mississippi,* 2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1860.
- CLEVELAND, HENRY. *Alexander H. Stephens, in Public and Private, with Letters and Speeches, Before, During, and Since the War.* Philadelphia: National Publishing Co., 1866.
- COOK, HARVEY T. *The Life and Legacy of David Rogerson Williams.* New York: Country Life Press, 1916.
- . *The Life Work of James Clement Furman.* Greenville, S. C., 1926.
- CRAVEN, AVERY O. *Edmund Ruffin, Southerner: a Study in Secession.* New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1932.
- DUBOSE, J. W. *Life and Times of William Lowndes Yancey.* Birmingham: Roberts & Son, 1892.
- FLIPPIN, PERCY S. *Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia: State Rights Unionist.* Richmond: Dietz Printing Co., 1931.
- GRAYSON, WILLIAM J. *James Louis Petigru, A Biographical Sketch.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866.
- JERVEY, THEODORE D. *Robert Y. Hayne and his Times.* New York: Macmillan Co., 1909.
- JOHNSTON, RICHARD M., AND BROWNE, WILLIAM H. *Life of Alexander H. Stephens.* Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co., 1878.
- LIVINGSTON, JOHN. *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living: with Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Their Lives and Actions,* 2 vols. New York: Cornish, Lamport & Co., 1853.
- MALONE, DUMAS. *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper, 1783-1837.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926.

- MEIGS, WILLIAM M. *The Life of John Caldwell Calhoun*, 2 vols. New York: Neale Publishing Co., 1917.
- MERRITT, ELIZABETH. *James Henry Hammond: 1807-1864*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1923.
- MITCHELL, BROADUS. *William Gregg, Factory Master of the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1928.
- O'CONNOR, MARY D. *The Life and Letters of M. P. O'Connor*. New York: Dempsey & Carroll, 1893.
- O'NEALL, JOHN BELTON. *Biographical Sketches of the Bench and Bar of South Carolina*, 2 vols. Charleston: S. G. Courtenay & Co., 1859.
- PEARCE, HAYWOOD J. *Benjamin H. Hill: Secession and Reconstruction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928.
- PERRY, THOMAS S. (ed.). *The Life and Letters of Francis Lieber*. Boston: James R. Osgood & Co., 1882.
- PHILLIPS, ULRICH B. *The Life of Robert Toombs*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1913.
- RANCK, JAMES B. *Albert Gallatin Brown: Radical Southern Nationalist*. New York and London: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1937.
- RHEA, LINDA. *Hugh Swinton Legaré: a Charleston Intellectual*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934.
- RIPPY, J. FRED. *Joel R. Poinsett: Versatile American*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1935.
- TRENT, WILLIAM P. *William Gilmore Simms*. Boston & New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1892.
- WELLS, E. L. *Hampton and his Cavalry in '64*. Richmond: B. J. Johnson Publishing Co., 1899.
- WHITE, LAURA A. *Robert Barnwell Rhett: Father of Secession*. New York: Century Co., 1931.
- WILTSE, CHARLES M. *John C. Calhoun: Nationalist, 1782-1828*. Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1944.

Periodicals

- BACOT, D. HUGER. "The South Carolina Up Country at the End of the Eighteenth Century," *American Historical Review*, XXVIII (July, 1923), 682-698.
- BROOKS, R. P. "Howell Cobb and the Crisis of 1850," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV (December, 1917), 279-298.

- CAUTHEN, CHARLES E. "South Carolina's Decision to Lead the Secession Movement," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XVIII (October, 1941), 360-372.
- CHAMBERLAIN, DANIEL H. "Reconstruction in South Carolina," *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXXVII (April, 1901), 473-484.
- COLE, A. C. "The South and the Right of Secession in the Early Fifties," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I (1914), 376-399.
- CRENSHAW, OLLINGER. "Christopher G. Memminger's Mission to Virginia, 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, VIII (August, 1942), 334-349.
- JERVEY, THEODORE D. "The Hayne Family," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, V (January, 1904), 168-188.
- KIBLER, LILLIAN A. "Unionist Sentiment in South Carolina in 1860," *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. IV, No. 3 (August, 1938), pp. 346-366.
- LESESNE, J. MAULDIN. "The Nullification Controversy in an Up-Country District," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1939, pp. 13-24.
- McKISSICK, J. RION. "Some Observations of Travelers on South Carolina, 1800-1860," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1932, pp. 44-51.
- "Memoir of Richard Yeadon, Esq.," *American Whig Review*, XXVIII (May, 1850), 477-486 (also in Perry Pamphlets, Vol. 32).
- OLIPHANT, MARY C. SIMMS. "The Genesis of an Up-Country Town," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1933, pp. 50-66.
- PATTON, JAMES W. "John Belton O'Neill," *South Carolina Historical Association Proceedings*, 1934, pp. 3-13.
- PERRY, BENJAMIN F. "The Bloody Scout: a Revolutionary Incident," *Orion*, Vol. III, No. 5 (January, 1844), pp. 216-219.
- . "The Election of Electors of President and Vice-President of the United States," *Southern Quarterly Review*, Vol. XI, No. 22 (April, 1847), pp. 345-376, 468-485.
- . "John C. Calhoun," *The Land We Love*, VI (March, 1869), 397-403.
- . "Revolutionary Incidents," *The Magnolia or Southern Apalachian*, I (July, 1842) 40-43, (August, 1842) 99-102, (September,

1842) 173-176; II (January, 1843) 30-40, (February, 1843) 109-111, (March, 1843) 145-152, (May, 1843) 326-327, (June, 1843) 380-382.

SKIPPER, O. C. "J. D. B. De Bow, Statistician of the Old South," South Carolina Historical Association *Proceedings*, 1938, pp. 3-15.

WHITE, LAURA A. "The Fate of Calhoun's Sovereign Convention in South Carolina," *American Historical Review*, XXXIV (July, 1929), 757-771.

———. "The National Democrats in South Carolina, 1852 to 1860," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXVIII (October, 1929), 370-389.

WOLFE, JOHN H. "The South Carolina Constitution of 1865 as a Democratic Document," South Carolina Historical Association *Proceedings*, 1942, pp. 18-29.

Index

- Abandoned lands in South Carolina, policy of Howard regarding, 418-419
- Abbeville, 88, 115, 198, 214, 260; Greenville and Columbia Railroad convention in, 215-216; during Reconstruction, 425; Perry addresses Democratic meeting in, 474
- Abbeville District, 214, 215
- Abolitionists, attacked by Nullifiers, 175; feared by Carolina slaveholders, 218-220. *See also* Slavery
- Adams, Dock, and Hamburg Riot, 485
- Adams, James H., 292; and reopening of slave trade, 283; and free schools, 308; Perry visits, 313
- Adams, John Quincy, 46; Perry meets, 208
- Adams Bill, 122, 127
- Agricultural societies, Perry's interest in, 210
- Agriculture, in up country, 11, 87-88; in Greenville District, 196; Calhoun's view of, 209; Perry's progressive ideas on, 29-30, 210
- Aiken, D. Wyatt, 464
- Aiken, William, and penitentiary system, 231; and secession movement, 1850, 265-266; and provisional governorship, 377-378
- Aiken, 391
- Alabama, and election of 1860, 297, 323
- "Alabama Platform," 297
- Albany, Perry visits, 208
- Aldrich, A. P., and secession, 1860, 335, 344; Speaker of South Carolina House, 356, 420; in state convention, 1865, 406, 414; and "Conservative Convention," 460; and New York convention, 469; on Perry, 391, 519
- Alliegance, interpretation of, 170
- Allston, Benjamin, 76
- Allston, Lemuel J., 39
- Alston, Julius P., 352
- Alston, William A., 266
- Alston, railroad to, 372
- "American System," 53. *See also* Tariff, Internal improvements
- Ames, Brigadier General, 417
- Amnesty Oath, 386, 392
- Amnesty Proclamation, of Johnson, 376
- Anderson, Colonel Robert, 17
- Anderson, Major Robert, 351
- Anderson, 172, 173, 197, 214, 215, 251, 292; and Blue Ridge Railroad, 304-305; Hampton campaign in, 487
- Anderson County, 10, 16
- Anderson District, 214; vote in congressional races, 1834, 1835, 168-169, 175; created, 304
- Anderson *Intelligencer*, on Perry, 331
- Anderson *Southern Rights Advocate*, Cooperationist, 268
- Andrews, Sidney, on devastation of South Carolina, 371; on Perry in state convention, 1865, 411-412; on abolition of parish system, 413
- Ansel, Martin F., tributes to Perry, 521
- "Anti-Secession Meetings," 1851, 270
- "Anti-Wilmot Proviso Meetings," 239-240
- Aristocrats of South Carolina, control state government, 18, 226; determined to preserve slavery, 218
- Asheville, railroad conventions in, 305, 512
- Asheville Academy, 34-35
- Ashmore, John D., elected to Congress, 292; and election of 1860, 298; for co-operative secession, 324; address at Greenville, 331-332; speaks for immediate secession in Columbia, 337, in Greenville, 338, in Pendleton, 341; letter to Perry on secession, 339-340; letter to Miles, 341
- Augusta, 118, 211; trade with, 11, 40, 71; Perry visits, 162; convention of Confederate Commissioners, 358-359
- Augusta *Chronicle and Sentinel*, articles by Benjamin H. Hill, 450
- Augusta *Constitutionalist*, 372
- Austell, S. L., 197

- Autobiography of B. F. Perry, 1849, 202-205; 1874, 501
- Back country, *see* Up country
- Bailey, J. C., on Perry and Sans Souci, 502-503
- Bale, John, 46
- Baltimore, Democratic conventions in, 1860, 321
- Bank of the State of South Carolina, record of, 234; attitude of Perry toward, 234-236; fight in legislature for winding up, 234-236; Perry's report on, 1865, 423
- Baptist Church, Perry attends in youth, 192
- Barker, Theodore G., opposes Radical regime, 476
- Barnwell, Robert W., 363, 365; Perry on, 60-61; in state convention, 1833, 153; accepts Compromise of 1850, 244-245; Co-operationist, 253, 258, 264-265, 267, 268; Confederate senator, 357; recommends Perry, 357, 359; visits Greenville, 367; candidate for United States Senate, 426; letter to Perry, 459-460; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Barnwell Court House, 391; Hammond speaks at, 290-291
- Beach Island, Hammond speaks at, 290
- Beattie, Emily, granddaughter of B. F. Perry, 501
- Beattie, Perry, grandson of Perry, 501
- Beattie, William, marries Fannie Perry, 501; death, 501
- Beaufort, 162, 397, 427
- Bell, John, and Constitutional Union party, 1860, 322; and vote of South, 333
- Bellinger, John R., tribute to Perry, 521
- Bennett, Thomas, 105
- Benton, Thomas H., 310; Perry on, 208
- Berry, Micajah, Greenville Unionist, 101
- Berry, Y. B. B., on Perry, 503
- Black, J. A., 227
- "Black Code," *see* Freedmen's code
- Blair, James, difficulty with Hammond, 120
- Blair, L. W. R., and gubernatorial campaign, 1880, 513
- Blake, Daniel, 260
- Blassingame, John, Jr., 83
- Blassingame, William, 119, 142
- Blassingame, William E., 81
- Blue Ridge Mountains, 34, 38
- Blue Ridge Railroad, 304-305
- Bolling, T. C., 343, 406
- Bonham, Milledge L., congressman, for secession, 1860, 332; appointed major general, 351; governor, 352, 356-358; on Perry, 519
- Boozar, Lemuel, and Charleston convention, 314-316
- Boston, Perry visits, 208
- Boston *Advertiser*, 371
- Boyce, James P., declines nomination to state convention, 1860, 343 and n.; in state convention, 1865, 406, 414; on Perry, 518
- Boyce, Ker, 260
- Boyce, William W., 263, 325, 363, 378; on *Southern Patriot*, 262-263; for separate secession, 323-324; speaks in Columbia, 332, in Pendleton, 341; and provisional governorship, 377; on Perry's appointment, 391; candidate for United States Senate, 426
- Branchville, 162, 212
- Brawley, Mr., of Charleston, tribute to Perry, 521
- Breckinridge, John C., 298, 316; nominated at Baltimore, 321; endorsed by all factions in South Carolina, 322; and vote in South, 333
- Briar, Thomas, 494
- Broad River, settlements along, 10, 11
- Brockman, Thomas P., 141, 261; Greenville Unionist in legislature, 246, 253; elected to state convention, 1851, 257
- Brooks, J. Wesley, and launching of *Southern Patriot*, 248; slaveholder, 266; and secession, 1860, 337-338
- Brooks, Preston S., 270; attack on Sumner, 293-294
- Brown, Albert G., and Compromise of 1850, 242; and election of 1860, 322
- Brown, Bedford, 5
- Brown, John, and Harper's Ferry, reaction of South Carolina to, 296-297
- Brown, Joseph E., and secession movement, 1860, 334; and Georgia constitution, 1868, 467
- Brownlow, William G., 387
- Brown's, 215, 216
- Bruton's Old Fields, Perry speaks at, 1830, 100; 1876, 486-487
- Bryan, Edward S., 248

- Buchanan, James, 295, 314
- Buist, E. T., 367
- Buist, Henry, and convention bill, 1860, 334; speaks in Greenville, 341
- Bull, W. A., and Perry-Townes controversy, 114-115, 117
- Burnley and Johnson appropriation, 222-223
- Burt, Armistead, 118, 420; and Perry's first law case, 66-67; in state convention, 1833, 153; on Western circuit, 198; Perry on, 201; congressman, 207, 223; Co-operationist, 265; and freedmen's code, 422, 424-425; on Johnson's policy, 442; at Greenville meeting, 1868, 473; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Burt, F., editor of *Pendleton Messenger*, 224
- Butler, Andrew P., 287; in legislature, 1826, 60; Perry on, 60; in Greenville, 200; Co-operationist, 258, 265, 267-268
- Butler, George, on Perry and Reconstruction Acts, 459
- Butler, M. C., and William Hayne Perry, 366; and campaign of 1870, 477-478; and Hamburg Riot, 485; and Mississippi Plan, 486
- Butler, Pierce M., 91, 223
- Butler, William, Revolutionary soldier, 205
- Butler, William, Greenville Nullifier, 98 101
- Butler, Mrs. William, 208
- Bynum, B., publishes Greenville *Southern Sentinel* 125; and Perry, 134, 135
- Bynum, Turner, comes to Greenville to edit *Southern Sentinel*, 124; reception by Perry, 124-125; editorial attack on Perry, 127-129; challenge and arrangements for duel, 129-130; Perry on, 131 and n.; duel at Hatton's Ford, 131-133; death and burial, 133, 134 and n.; effect of duel, 164, 167-168
- Cainhoy Riot, 490
- Calhoun, John C., 85, 87, 124, 138, 302; Perry's early admiration for, 49-50, 55; moves to Fort Hill, 56 and n.; at Greenville public dinner, 1826, 56-57; nationalist, 87; "Exposition and Protest," 88-89; and Jefferson birthday dinner, 96; state rights leader, 103; and nullification, 92, 105, 149, 151-152; Perry on, 152; viewed as dictator by Perry and Huger, 160; entertains Perry in Washington, 208; dominates South Carolina, 156, 217-218; program for South, 156, 209, 218; compliments Perry, 210; spokesman for planter aristocracy, 218; and presidential nomination, 1848, 220, 223; and Southern movement, 220-221, 239-241; relations with Perry, 1847, 221-222; influence in congressional race, 1848, 225; thwarts democratic reform of state government, 226; and Bank of the State, 236; and distribution fund, 236-237; and Compromise of 1850, 241-242; death of, 243; Unionists on, 243-244; Perry sees wish fulfilled, 287; and prophecy, 455; Perry writes reminiscences of, 507; Perry speaks on, 509
- Calhoun, Perry speaks at, 474
- Calhoun's Mills, 113
- California, agitation over admission of, 241-242
- Camden, 120, 320
- Camden *Journal*, and Hammond, 120; on secession, 337; on Reconstruction Act, 449
- Campbell, James B., urges Perry for governor, 356; Perry visits, 391; candidate for United States Senate, 427; delegate to New York convention, 469
- Campbell, W. H., Secessionist editor of Greenville *Mountaineer*, 1850, 246; and legislative race, 1860, 331; and state convention, 1860, 339; on Perry, 519-520
- Camperdown Cotton Mill, 74, 512
- Canby, E. R. S., 470
- Capers, Ellison, on Perry, 6 n., 516
- Capers, William, 263
- Cardozo, Francis L., 471, 497
- Carolina Coffee House, 179
- "Carolina doctrine," 104, 106. *See* Nullification
- Carolina Hall, 496
- Carpenter, Richard B., in gubernatorial race, 1870, 477-478
- Cashville, Perry speaks at, 270
- Cass, Lewis, 223-224
- Cavis, Mr., of Columbia *Carolinian*, 269
- Centennial Exposition, Perry attends, 485

- Chalmers, Mr., 29
- Chamberlain, Daniel H., Attorney-General of South Carolina, 471; in gubernatorial race, 1874, 481; reform administration, 482, 484; wins support of Conservatives, 483-484; endorsed by public meetings, 484; and Hamburg Riot, 485; speaking tour interrupted by Democrats, 486; employs Federal troops, 490; campaign speeches, 491; speech of Perry against, 492-493; declared elected by Republicans, 494; inaugurated governor, 496; withdrawal from South Carolina, 497; makes farewell address, 497; denounced by Perry, 497; indicts Republican regime years later, 497 n.
- Channing, William Ellery, 193
- Charleston, 14, 137, 147, 178, 200, 218, 259, 260, 320, 373, 378, 427; trade, 11, 40, 71, 211; and nullification, 101, 106, 120, 124; Perry visits, 162, 179, 186, 202; magazines, 205-206; and railroads, 211-214; and Southern movement, 220-221; and expulsion of Samuel Hoar, 237; and secession movement, 1850, 247, 267, 271, 272; and Blue Ridge Railroad, 304; and secession, 1860, 335, 336, 344, 346; and Civil War, 353, 363, 368; mourns Lincoln's death, 375; inaugurates movement for restoration of civil government, 376-378; in convention election, 1865, 405; and representation, 408; Union Republican convention in, 453; supports Perry on Reconstruction Act, 457-458; constitutional convention in, 1868, 462-463
- Charleston Convention, 3-6, 314-316; public reaction to withdrawal of South Carolina delegates, 316-318, 320; Perry on, 317-319, 508
- Charleston *City Gazette*, 101
- Charleston *Courier*, 202, 320; and nullification, 101; essays of Gregg in, 210; and secession movement, 1850, 247, 269; and secession, 1860, 325, 330-331; pro-Davis, 357; and movement for restoration of civil government, 376-377; on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 389; on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 455
- Charleston *Daily Standard*, 281
- Charleston *Evening News*, 268
- Charleston-Hamburg Railroad, 211
- Charleston Medical College, Perry addresses, 508-509
- Charleston *Mercury*, Rhett serenaded at building, 3; and secession movement, 1850, 247, 269; and election of 1860, 323; and secession, 1860, 330, 335; opposes Davis, 357; on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 456; letter of Perry against constitution of 1868, 463-464
- Charleston *News*, on Perry's Message to state convention, 1865, 410; endorses Perry for Congress, 479; on Reconstruction Act, 449; on Perry's opposition, 456
- Charleston *News and Courier*, endorses Chamberlain, 483-484; letter of Perry, "Who Freed the Slaves?," 490-491; obituary of Perry, 517
- Charleston Riot, 490
- Charleston *Southern Patriot*, 101
- Charleston *Southern Standard*, 268
- Charlotte, 378, 507
- Chase, Salmon P., Perry calls on, 469
- Chauga Creek, 16
- Cheraw, 358; Perry addresses Lyceum, 509
- Cherokee Indians, 9-10, 14
- Chesnut, James, Co-operationist, 260, 267, 270; elected United States senator, 292; and Harper's Ferry, 296; and secession, 1860, 332, 337, 341; on Executive Council, 354; Perry on, 363; president of "Conservative Convention," 460; and Democratic state convention, 1868, 464
- Chester, 260, 262, 378
- Chesterfield District, 140
- Cheves, Langdon, and second Nashville convention, 252; Co-operationist, 253, 258, 265, 267, 268, 275; Perry speaks on, 509
- Child, Susanna, 7
- Chisolm, Mrs. Robert, on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 458-459
- Choestow Creek, 15-16, 18, 23
- Choice, Jefferson, 119
- Choice, William, lawyer of Greenville, 42, 64; Perry on, 75; altercation and fight with Perry, 118-120; candidate for legislature, 123
- Christ Episcopal Church, Perry attends, 194

- Cincinnati *Gazette*, on Perry's "Disunion" letter, 328
- Civil War, Perry's reaction to, 359-365
- Clapp, J. M., editor of Charleston *Mercury*, 269
- Clay, Henry, 53, 97, 307; and Compromise of 1850, 150-151, 152, 242, 245
- Clemson, Thomas G., on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 457
- Cleveland, Benjamin, 17, 19; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Cleveland, Caroline, 17, 120
- Cleveland, Grover, 515
- Cleveland, Jeremiah, 41, 42, 77
- Cleveland, Mr., mayor of Greenville, 494
- Clinton, Perry addresses farm society at, 503
- Cobb, Howell, and California question, 241; and secession movement, 1850, 252, 263; subscribes to *Southern Patriot*, 261; and election of 1860, 322-323; urges South Carolina secession, 345
- Cobb, T. R. R., and election of 1860, 323
- Cobb, Wilson, Unionist of Greenville, 99, 101
- Codification, of South Carolina laws, urged by Perry, 54-55, 231, 423
- Colcock, C. J., and nullification, 153
- Colcock, W. F., and secession movement, 1850, 265; and secession, 1860, 335; Perry on, 363
- Coleman, John T., and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 212; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213
- Colleges, church, founding of, 309-311
- Collins, Eleanor, 19
- Columbia, description of, 1826, 58-59; state Unionist conventions in, 1832, 137, 145; activities of Perry in, 186, 189, 198, 202, 210; and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 212; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213-215; description of, 1850, 226; and secession movement, 1850, 256-257, 260; mass meeting for popular education, 306; state Democratic conventions in, 1860, 299-301, 320; secessionist excitement in, 1860, 332-333, 336; secession convention, 344-345; description of after burning by Sherman, 371-372; disruption of communications with, 372, 378; urges restoration of civil government, 377; Perry confers with leading citizens in, 391; and Reconstruction Acts, 459; "Conservative Convention" in, 460; state Democratic convention in, 1868, 464
- Columbia *Commercial Transcript*, Cooperationist, 268
- Columbia *Free Press and Hive*, and nullification, 106; fight of editor with John S. Preston, 120
- Columbia *Palmetto Banner*, for separate secession, 269
- Columbia *Phoenix*, 378; on Perry's speech of July, 1865, 381-382, 384; on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 389; on Negro troops, 400-401; on convention election, 1865, 404; on Orr in state convention, 411; on nomination of Orr for governor, 416; letter of Hampton in, 420; on Perry's Message to legislature, 423; on Perry's election to United States Senate, 427; on ratification of Thirteenth Amendment, 431; on Perry's provisional governorship, 435; letter of Perry against ratification of Fourteenth Amendment, 447; for compliance with Reconstruction Act, 449; letters of Perry against Reconstruction Acts, 450-455; on Perry's letters, 455-456; arouses Democratic electorate, 1868, 475; endorses Perry for Congress, 479
- Columbia *Register*, obituary of Perry, 517-518
- Columbia *South Carolinian*, 202; for separate secession, 256-257, 263, 269; on Perry and Charleston convention, 317; endorses Perry for Congress, 479-480
- Columbia *Telegraph*, Secessionist, 262
- Columbia *Telescope*, Secessionist, 256
- Columbus (Ga.) *Sun*, on Perry, 447
- Committee of Twenty-One, and nullification convention, 142-143, 152; and state convention, 1852, 274-275
- Compromise of 1850, 242-243, 245-246
- Confederate Army, admiration of Perry for, 365-366
- Confederate Government, and Confisca-

- tion Act, 353; and Impressment Act, 357
- Congaree House, 336
- Congaree River, 14, 58
- Congress, of United States, Perry on, 207-208
- Congressional race, in Greenville-Pendleton District, 1833, 160-161; 1834, 163-169; 1835, 172-176
- Conner, James, and secession, 1860, 334, 335; and election of 1876, 489
- Constitution, of United States, Calhoun's view of, 89; Perry's view of, 47, 90-91, 94, 145
- Cook, H. C., 494
- Cooke, Thompson H., Radical judge, 505; Perry on, 505
- Cooper, Thomas, 87, 202
- Co-operation party, launching of, 267; Perry welcomes as ally, 268-269; meeting in Charleston, 271; and election to Southern congress, 272; and state convention, 1852, 274-276
- Co-operationist newspapers, 268
- Corbin, D. T., 497
- Cotton, invades up country, 11; effect of production in Southwest on seaboard South, 87, 140; manufacture, 209-210
- Courts, *see* Judiciary, Federal Judiciary
- Cowpens, Battle of, Perry publishes sketch of, 205; anniversary address at, 171-172
- Cox, Thomas M., erects coach factory, 196; and Greenville academy property, 310
- Croft, Edward, on Perry, 520
- Croft, Randell, friend of Perry, 43, 131; and presentation of silver pitchers to Perry, 311-312
- Croft, Theodore, 43
- Crook, A. B., friend of Perry, 142; Perry on, 82; and Perry-Townes controversy, 117-118; and Perry-Bynum duel, 129-131; attends Perry, 173; and secession, 1860, 338
- Crittenden, John, 40
- Crittenden, S. S., 74
- Crittenden's Hotel, Perry boards at, 45, 46, 73, 82, 83
- Crittenden's store, 199
- Cunningham, John, and secession, 1860, 335
- Cunningham, Pamela, friendship with Perry, 177, 470
- Cunningham, Richard, 101
- Cunningham, Robert, and nullification, 147-148, 163; Perry visits, 177
- Daniels, C. F., 120
- Dargan, G. W., 227
- "Dark Corner," 487
- David, Charles A., reminiscences of early Greenville, 74
- Davis, Jefferson, and Compromise of 1850, 242; and election of 1860, 322; calls for volunteers, 351; attitude of South Carolina towards, 356-358; appoints Perry district judge, 359; release requested by South Carolina convention, 1865, 415
- Davis, Mr., of Lodi, 173
- Davis, Warren R., 41; Nullifier congressman, 92; urges convention call, 98; and Perry-Symmes controversy, 110-111, 113; speaks at Greenville, 140; and congressional race, 1833, 160 and n.; Perry on, 161; and congressional race, 1834, 165; death, 172
- Dawkins, Thomas, 418
- Day, Jeremiah, 208
- DeBow, J. D. B., 294
- Democratic party, South Carolinians rejoin, 217; state convention endorses Calhoun for President, 1843, 220; state convention, 1856, 284-285; rift of Southern Democrats with Douglas, 295; state convention, 1860, 299-301; split in Charleston convention, 3-4; plea for unity by Perry, 6; state convention, May 30, 1860, 320; Baltimore convention, 321; state convention, 1868, 464; protest against state constitution of 1868, 466-467; wins county elections, 468; second state convention, 1868, 468-469; New York convention, 469-470; and election of 1868, 472-476; and election of 1876, 484-486
- Desaussure, Henry W., 105
- deSaussure, W. F., on Perry, 390
- D'Estaing, Comte, 8
- Distribution fund, 236
- Disunion, seen as consequence of nullification by Perry, 149; letter, "Dis-

- union," in Charleston *Courier*, 1860, 325-328. *See* Secession
- Donaldson, T. Q., 312
- Douglas, Stephen A., 322; endorsed by Perry and Orr after passage of Kansas-Nebraska Act, 280; and revolt against Buchanan, 295; Perry on, 289; South condemns apostasy, 295; and Dred Scott decision, 295; and Charleston convention, 314, 316; Perry opposes, 319; nominated at Baltimore convention, 321; and vote of South in election of 1860, 333
- Dowse, Edmund, 15
- D'Oyley, Charles W., 49
- Dozier, Robert, and state convention, 1865, 413; on Perry, 519
- Drayton, William, and nullification, 105, 106, 137
- Dred Scott decision, indignation of North over, 294
- Drovers, Tennessee and Kentucky, 40
- Dudley, C. W., on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 390; on Perry, 505-506
- Duel, between Perry and Bynum, 127-135; affects Perry's congressional race, 168
- Duncan, Perry E., friend of Perry, 82, 142; intermediary, 109, 111-112; second in Perry-Bynum duel, 131, 133; Unionist in legislature, 1850, 246, 253; and launching of *Southern Patriot*, 248; elected to state convention, 257; and secession, 1860, 338, 339; on Perry, 519
- Dunham, Benajah, friend of Perry, 81-82, 131, 142; and nullification, 97; and launching of *Southern Patriot*, 248
- Dunkin, Chancellor, 266
- "Dutch Fork," 11, 13
- Earle, Baylis J., 41, 42, 46, 59, 64, 67-68, 70, 77, 119, 133, 160; solicitor, 44; appearance and personality, 44; Perry enters law office of, 44-45; judge, 68; Nullifier, 92, 100, 141-142; on Western circuit, 198; sociability of, 199, 200
- Earle, Elias, altercation with Yancey, 199
- Earle, Elias D., friend of Perry, 43, 62-63, 75; intermediary, 115, 118
- Earle, Miriam, 67, 77-78, 177
- Earle, Robinson M., killed by Yancey, 198-199
- Earle, Samuel, 17, 77, 133, 205
- Easley, W. K., and secession, 338-339; and Civil War, 367
- Economic conditions, in Greenville, 40; in seaboard South in 1820's, 51, 87; Perry urges improvement of, 209
- Edgefield, 172, 173, 200, 227, 351, 378; and election of 1876, 486, 495; on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 458; and Democratic state convention, 1868, 468
- Edgefield District, and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 214
- Edwards, Henry W., 208
- Election of 1860, in Mississippi, 322; in Georgia, 322-323; in Alabama, 323; in South Carolina, 321-333; significance of popular vote in South, 333
- Election of 1868, 475-476
- Elections in South Carolina, of 1870, 478; of 1872, 478, 480; of 1874, 481-482; of 1876, 486-497
- Elford, C. J., 367; and Greenville *Southern Patriot*, 248-250, 274; editor of *Patriot and Mountaineer*, 312; and secession, 1860, 338; on Greenville delegation to Washington, 384; agent for pardons, 396
- Elford, G. E., proprietor of *Patriot and Mountaineer*, 312; on Charleston convention, 317; and secession, 1860, 337
- Eliot, John, 7
- Ellenton Riot, 490
- Elliott, Robert Brown, 497
- Elmore, B. T., 218
- Elmore, Franklin H., president of Bank of State of South Carolina, 218, 234; correspondence with Perry on liquidation, 235
- Elmore, John A., 344-345
- Emigration, to Southwest, 51, 87, 140
- "Eminent American Statesmen," essays by Perry, 508
- English, Mr., 28
- Erskine College, address of Perry at, 207
- "Essays on Domestic Industry," by Gregg, 210
- Etheredge, M., on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 458
- Eutawville, 402
- Evans, Josiah J., 266

- Everett, Edward, 322, 332
 "Exposition and Protest," 105
- Fair, Simeon, 198, 208
- Farmers' Society of Pendleton, Perry addresses, 511
- Farming, *see* Agriculture
- Farrow, James, 359
- Federal Army, occupies South Carolina, 375
- Federal Constitution, *see* Constitution of United States
- Federal Judiciary, Perry's view of, 90-91, 94, 96
- Federalist*, *The*, 50.
- Ferguson, John, 376
- Fillmore, Millard, 254, 326
- Finney, William W., on Perry, 458
- Flat Rock, 34, 201, 206
- Foote, Henry Stuart, and secession movement, 1850, 241-242, 263; and election of 1860, 322
- Force Bill, 151, 153-155
- Fort Hill, 56 n., 105
- Fort Hill letter, 105, 106
- Fort Prince George, 16
- Foster, John, 19
- Foster, Robert, uncle of Perry, 19; Perry visits, 29, 35; Perry on, 32-33; kindness of, 31, 32, 43, 45, 66; advises Perry, 63, 78; devotion of Perry to, 32-33, 187
- Fourteenth Amendment, passage of, 443; opposition of South to ratification, 443, 445-446; letters of Perry against ratification, 446, 447; Message of Orr against, 448; rejection by South Carolina, 448; ratification required for readmission, 449; ratified, 467, 470
- Franklin, Benjamin, 307; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- "Franklin Polemic Society," 46-47, 53
- Freedmen, *see* Negroes
- Freedmen's Bureau, in South Carolina, seizes abandoned plantations and homes, 373-374, 398; distributes food, 373; founds schools, 373-374; and demoralization of Negro labor, 401-402; improved administration of, 418-419
- Freedmen's code, preparation of ordered by state convention, 1865, 414-415; Perry urges adoption by legislature, 422, 424; provisions of code and purposes, 424; enacted into law, 436; humane features, 425; attacked by Radicals, 425; New York *Tribune* on, 431; effect on Northern sentiment, 425-426, 439
- "Free Suffrage," essay by Perry, 53
- French Broad and Greenville Railroad, 305
- Frost, Edward, and secession movement, 1850, 247, 258, 266; on Charleston committee to request appointment of Provisional Governor, 377; interview with Johnson, 378; elected to state convention, 1865, 405
- Fugitive Slave Law, in Compromise of 1850, 242; nullified by North, 292-293
- Fuller, Mrs., of Greenville, 367
- Furman, C. M., tribute to Perry, 520
- Furman, James C., 352; endorses withdrawal at Charleston convention, 317; speaks for secession, 1860, 338; nominated to state convention, 339; letter in Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, 341-342; on Perry, 519
- Furman University, founded, 309; Perry addresses literary societies of, 510
- Gaer, William J., 377
- Gaillard, Franklin, 317
- Gantt, Richard, 70
- Gantt, William J., 64, 66, 75
- Garfield, James A., 515
- Gary, Martin W., in Democratic state convention, 1868, 468; delegate to New York convention, 469; advocates straight-out Democratic ticket, 1876, 485; and Mississippi plan, 486; and gubernatorial campaign, 1880, 513
- George's Creek, Perry speaks at, 474
- Georgetown, 76, 391, 427
- Georgetown District, 140
- Georgia, and secession movement, 1850, 252; convention adopts "Georgia Platform," 255; and election of 1860, 322-323; encourages South Carolina to secede, 335; calls state convention, 336
- Germans, settle in Piedmont, 10-11
- Gettysburg, Battle of, 369
- Gibbes, R. W., 226
- Gillmore, Major General Q. A., 391; assumes military control of South Caro-

- lina, 375; interview with Perry, 403-404
- Gist, W. H., denounces Perry, 1856, 284; and secession, 1860, 329, 330, 332; on South Carolina Executive Council, 354; Perry on, 363
- Glassy Mountain, speech of Perry at, 487
- Glen, James, 9, 16
- "Glencoe," Perry's farm, 368-369, 502
- Glenn, D. C., 322
- Goode, Colonel, 173
- Gower, Eben, 196
- Graniteville, 210
- Grant, U. S., 473, 490, 496
- Grayson, William J., accepts Compromise of 1850, 244; letter to Governor Seabrook, 248, 263-264; on Perry's election to state convention, 258; on quietude in parishes, 1852, 277; removed by Pierce, 279
- Greeley, Horace, 443, 479
- Green, John T., 481
- Greenback party, 513-515
- Greene, Nathanael, 39
- Greenville, founding of, 39; descriptions of, 1823, 38-39, 41-42; summer resort, 40, 46, 72-73, 88, 195-196; economic prosperity of, 40-41, 71-73, 88, 196; contrast with low country, 41; social conditions, 41-42, 73-75, 190; early journals, 48-49; dinner to Calhoun, 56; descriptions of, 1826, 71 and n., 72-73; description of, 1830, 73; and tariff of 1828, 88; Fourth of July celebration, 1829, 91; and nullification, 92, 95, 96-101; Unionist, 1831, 107; "Anti-Nullification rally," 122; welcomes Perry after Bynum duel, 134; Unionist convention, 1832, 137-139; Nullifier rally, 139-140; elects Unionists to legislature, 140, and to nullification convention, 141-142; protests action of convention, 143-145; Union Society defies Nullifiers, 150-151; indignation over test oath, 162, 168; state convention of Union party, 163; and congressional election, 1834, 168-169; denounces compromise on test oath, 170; growth and changes, 1835-1850, 195-196; dinner to Waddy Thompson, 200; and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 211-212; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213, 214-216; approves Calhoun for President, 220; pledges resistance to Wilmot Proviso, 222; endorses Southern movement, 240; Secessionist rally, 1850, 249-250; elects Unionists to state convention, 257-258; "Anti-Secession Meeting," 1851, 270; elects Co-operationists to Southern congress, 271-272; ratification meeting for Pierce, 277; endorses withdrawal from Charleston convention, 317; engulfed in secession wave, 1860, 337-339, 341-342; reaction sets in, 342; runs "Co-operation ticket" for state convention, 343; victory of Secessionists, 343; and Civil War, 349, 352, 359, 363, 367-368; requests restoration of civil government, 379-381; delegation confers with Johnson, 384-385; headquarters of Perry as Provisional Governor, 386, 395; vote for state convention, 1865, 405; ratification meeting for Seymour, 473; Democratic county convention in, 1876, 484; Hampton campaign in, 488-490, 492-494; viewed Perry as Christian, 507; secures Air-Line Railroad, 512; growth of, 1870-1880, 512; Democratic county convention in, 1878, 513; and gubernatorial campaign, 1880, 514-515
- Greenville academies, 38, 47, 207, 310-311
- Greenville bar, memorial exercises for Perry, 520-521
- Greenville circuit court, tribute to Perry, 521
- Greenville and Columbia Railroad, launching of, charter and subscriptions, 213-214; stockholders organize, 214; rivalry of districts over route—Abbeville and Anderson win, 214-215; Greenville decides to unite with road at Brown's, 215; opposition of Anderson overcome at Abbeville convention, 215-216; Perry on convention, 215-216; Greenville branch constructed, 216, 305
- Greenville County, 10, 13, 39, 468
- Greenville *Daily News*, founding of, 508; Perry on, 508; urges straightout Democratic ticket, 483, 484; letter of Perry against Radicals, 1880, 513; obituary of Perry, 516
- Greenville District, 19, 56, 110, 140,

- 222; contrasted with low country, 41; Western trade with, 71; organizes Union Societies, 150-151; vote in congressional election, 1835, 175-176; devotion to Perry and Unionism, 176; in congressional election, 1848, 224-225; industries of, 1850, 196; elects Unionists to legislature, 1850, 246; and to state convention, 1851, 257-258; election to Southern congress, 272; elects Secessionists to state convention, 1860, 343; and elections of 1868, 466, 475
- Greenville *Enterprise and Mountaineer*, articles by Perry in, 485, 491-492, 507-508, 513-514, 515; obituary of Perry, 517
- Greenville Female College, founding of, 309-311
- Greenville Hotel, 40, 98, 99
- "Greenville Literary Club," 509
- Greenville Lyceum, 196, 207
- Greenville *Mountaineer*, 134, 136, 151, 152, 187; founding of, 89; Perry becomes editor of, 92, 108 and n.; backed by Unionists over state, 103, 124; publication suspended, January-May, 1831, 104; tilt with Symmes of Pendleton *Messenger*, 109-113; tilt with Henry Townes, 113-115; subscription list, 124, 126; conflict with Turner Bynum of Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, 124-130; denounces Nullification Ordinance and test oath, 144-145; Perry resigns as editor, 157-158; reviews of Perry in, 203; on congressional election, 1848, 225; Secessionist under W. H. Campbell, 1850-1851, 246, 262
- Greenville *Patriot and Mountaineer*, 317; founded by Perry, 1855, 312
- Greenville *Republican*, 48, 96, 508; founding of, 49; political articles by Perry in, 50-55; editorials on Greenville in, 72-73; sentimental articles by Perry in, 78-79; superseded by Greenville *Mountaineer*, 89
- Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, 331; founding of, 312; and secession, 1860, 337, 343; on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 457
- Greenville *Southern Patriot*, launching of, 1850, 248-251; first issue, 260; subscription list, 260-261; influence in other Southern states, 260-261; reception of, 261-262; editorial policy, 262; organ of Unionists, 263-264; reorganization of, 273-274; financial status, 274
- Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, Nullifier journal, launching of, 124; notices of, 124-125; editorial attack on Perry, 127-129; discontinuance of, 135-136
- Greenville Theatre, 196
- Gregg, James, 59, 60
- Gregg, Maxcy, and secession movement, 1850, 265, 276
- Gregg, William, 270; and cotton mills, 209-210; and Southern nationalism, 294-295
- Griffin, Dr., of Cambridge, 173
- Grisham, Joseph, 30, 266; loses congressional race, 1833, 161; correspondence with Perry over nomination, 1834, 163-165; influence in defeat of Perry, 168-169; on Perry's nomination, 1835, 172
- Hagood, Johnson, 513-514
- Hamburg, 211, 270
- Hamburg *Republican*, 268
- Hamburg Riot, 485
- Hamilton, Alexander, 50, 307
- Hamilton, James, 302; denounces tariff, 87; elected governor by Nullifiers, 102; instigates "State Rights and Free Trade Associations," 103; addresses Nullifier rallies, 106, 140; convenes legislature, 141; and state convention, 1833, 151-153; and secession movement, 1850, 263
- Hammond, James H., 292; edits Nullifier newspaper, Columbia *Southern Times*, 120; difficulties with Blair and Daniels, 120; second to Turner Bynum, 131-132; and Bank of State, 234; and secession movement, 1850, 266; elected to United States Senate, 287; correspondence with Perry on protection of slavery within the Union, 287-290; Beach Island speech, 290-291; letter to Miles on attitude of South toward Union, 291; and John Brown affair, 296; and election of 1860, 298, 316, 321, 324, 329; and secession, 1860, 332, 337
- Hampton family, 205

- Hampton, Wade (1791-1858), 226, 265-266
- Hampton, Wade (1818-1902), 391, 418, 450, 513; in Civil War, 350, 365-366; on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 390; on restoration of state, 392; and state convention, 1865, 405; and gubernatorial election, 1865, 420; and Reconstruction Act, 449-450, 459-460; Perry on, 455; and "Conservative Convention," 1867, 460; and Democratic state convention, 1868, 469; delegate to New York convention, 469-470; addresses Greenville Democratic ratification meeting, 473; speaks at Walhalla, 474; opposes Radical regime, 476; and campaign of 1876, at Anderson, 487, at Walhalla, 487-488, at Greenville, 488-490, at Honeapath, 492; and contested returns, 494; dual government, 496; supported by state as governor, 496-497; confirmed by Hayes, 497; on Perry, 519
- Hancock, W. S., 514-515; Perry on, 469
- Hardy, J. F. E., 35, 37
- Harleston, Mr., 132
- Harley, Mr., 184
- Harper, William, and nullification, 140, 153; Perry on, 191
- Harrison, James, 339
- Harrison, John H., 99, 101, 103
- Harrison, Richard, 42
- Harrison, Thomas, 59
- Harrison, William H., 219, 220
- Hart, Samuel, 376
- Hartford Convention, 141, 143
- Haskell, Colonel, 131
- Haskell, John C., tribute to Perry, 521-522
- Hatton's Ford, 130, 131, 132 and n., 134, 167
- Hayne, Arthur P., 266
- Hayne, I. W., 329, 354, 363
- Hayne, Paul Hamilton, on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 459
- Hayne, Robert Y., 179, 302; Perry on, 83-84; and nullification, 106, 142, 148, 149, 155-156; and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 211-212
- Haynsworth, W. F. B., on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 458
- Heart, John H., 269
- Hendersonville, 34
- Hendricks, Thomas A., 485
- Henry, James Edward, 66, 198
- Hewitt, John H., 47-48, 53, 75
- Heyward, Julius H., on Perry, 520
- Heyward, Nathaniel, 265-266
- Hill, Benjamin H., and secession, 1860, 322, 336; writes articles against Reconstruction Act, 450; Perry's influence on, 450 n.; Charleston *News* on, 456; opposes Georgia constitution, 1868, 467
- Hillhouse, J. P., 331
- Hillsborough, 11
- Hilton Head, 375
- Hite family, 205
- Hoar, Samuel, 237-238
- Hodges, the Reverend Mr., 38, 43
- Hoke, David, 331
- Holden, William W., 376
- Holmes, Isaac E., 377
- "Homestead, The," Poinsett's home in Greenville, 200
- Honeapath, Hampton Day at, 492
- Hooker, Charles E., and secession, 1860, 3, 344-345
- Hooper, Johnson, 28
- Hooper, Matthew, 27
- Horry District, in election of 1851, 272
- Horse races, 196
- Houston, William H., 376
- Howard, O. O., 393, and Freedmen's Bureau, 401; and abandoned lands in South Carolina, 418-419
- Huger, Alfred, 391; and nullification, 141; on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 390; elected to state convention, 1865, 405; confers with Johnson, 418
- Huger, Daniel Elliott, 105, 121, 218, 266; career and personality described by Perry, 84-86; adoration of Perry for, 85-86; toast of Perry to, 91; elected to legislature, 1830, 101; leads Unionists against convention call, 102; challenges Rhett, 102; contributes to support of Greenville *Mountaineer*, 103; and caucuses of Union party, 1832, 142, 143; and state Union convention, 1832, 146-147; on Nullifiers and Calhoun, 160; sees Perry at Court of Appeals, 198; elected to state convention, 1851, 258; Perry speaks on, 509

- Humphrey, Benjamin G., 426
 Hunt, Davis, 21, 70
 Hunter, R. M. T., 298, 315, 317, 319
- Immigration, in South Carolina, urged by Perry, 421-422; by Orr, 435
 Impressment Act, of Confederate Government, enforcement of in South Carolina, 357-358
 Independent Treasury, 217, 219
 Industry, diversification of, urged by Perry, 209, 421-422, 509; by Orr, 435
 Inglis, John A., 346, 460
 Internal improvements, by Federal Government, denounced by South Carolina legislature, 51; attitude of Perry on, 51-53, 94
 Irby, James H., lawyer of Laurens, 66; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 215; and secession movement, 1850, 266, 271-272
 Ivery, Deborah, grandmother of Perry, 7
- Jackson, Andrew, 53, 96, 217, 307; Perry on, 1824, 46; and nullification, 106, 148, 149, 151; Perry champions, 106
 Jackson, Miss., 261
 Jamison, D. F., 345, 354
 Jefferson, Thomas, Perry writes on, 508
 John's Island, 398
 Johnson, Mr., editor of *Columbia Carolinian*, 269
 Johnson, Andrew, 379, 405, 443; distrusted by South Carolinians, 375; proclamations of, 376; appoints Perry Provisional Governor, 378; Perry on, in speech to Greenville public meeting, 380-381; receives Greenville delegation, 385; described by Perry, 387; and appointments in South Carolina, 395; communications with Perry, 406, 416, 428-432, 435, 437-438; South Carolina convention endorses Administration, 416; confers with South Carolina delegation, 418, and with Trescot on pardons, 418; South Carolina supports, 442; and campaign of 1866, 445; impeachment of, 467-468; Perry congratulates on result, 468; Perry calls on, 469; and New York convention, 469; Perry congratulates on victory in Tenn., 477; Perry writes sketch of, 507
 Johnson, David, 105; and nullification, 146, 155
 Johnson, Herschel V., and election of 1860, 322; *Charleston News* on, 456
 Johnson, Reverdy, 439
 Johnson, Robert, 9
 Johnson, William, 105
 Johnston, Job, and nullification, 155; on Western circuit, 198
 Johnston, Joseph E., 372
 Journal of B. F. Perry, 1832-1863, 203-204
 Judiciary in South Carolina, antiquated system, 230; campaign of Perry for reform of, 230-233; creation of Court of Appeals, 304
 "Junius," pseudonym of Perry, 50-52
- Kansas, admission of, Hammond and Perry on, 287-290
 Kansas-Nebraska Bill, endorsed by Perry and Orr, 280; effect on sectionalism, 293
 Keitt, Lawrence M., 291, 325; and secession, 1860, 323, 332, 337
 Kentucky and Tennessee Inn, 195
 Keowee, 14, 16
Keowee Courier, on Perry's Message to state convention, 1865, 410; on Perry's election to United States Senate, 427; on Messages of Perry and Orr to legislature, 435; on Perry's retirement, 438
 Kershaw District, 140
 Kinderhook, Perry visits, 208
 King, Mitchell, friend of Perry, 201; and secession movement, 1850, 258, 266
 King, William S., editor of *Charleston Courier*, 269
 Kingstree, 456
 Know-Nothing party, in South Carolina, 283; campaign of Perry against, 283
 Knoxville, railroad convention in, 212
- La Borde, Maximilian, 391
Ladies' Literary Portfolio, 48-49, 78, 508
 Lancaster, 260
 Lancaster District, 140
Land We Love, The, Perry contributes to, 507
 Lane, Joseph, 321

- Latimer, J. P., 406
 Laurens, Henry, Perry writes on, 508
 Laurens, 172, 213, 214, 215, 246
 Laurens County, and election of 1876, 495
 Laurens District, 148, 177, 222, 224-225
 Laurensville *Herald*, 223
Leagues of United Southerners, 295
 LeConte, Joseph, 371, 391
 LeConte, Mrs. Josephine, on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 390-391
 Lee, John, 30, 37-38
 Lee, Thomas, 105
 Lee, Robert E., 359, 372
 "Legal Antiquities," by Perry, 206
 Legaré, Hugh S., Perry on, 61; and nullification, 101, 105, 106
 Leigh, Benjamin W., 152
 Leitner, Colonel, 254
 Library, of Perry, 197, 202-203, 499-500
 Lieber, Francis, on penal reform, 230; on Calhoun's death, 244; on Perry's election to state convention, 1851, 258; writes Unionist articles for *Southern Patriot*, 264; on Cheves, 267; against separate secession, 1850, 270; and Perry-Taber controversy, 307
 Limestone Springs, Perry speaks at, 207
 Lincoln, 323, 342; and Freeport debate, 295; and election of 1860, 323-333; death of mourned in South Carolina, 375
 Livingston, John, Perry visits, 469
 Lodi, 172
 Long, David, 195
 Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 211-212, 233
 Low country, contrasted with up country, 17; controls state government, 18; Secessionist, 1850-1852, 272
 Luddith, Lewis, 119
 Lynah, James, 376
 McAliley, Samuel, 378
 McBee, Vardry, property in Greenville, 38, 39; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 215; and secession movement, 1850, 257, 266; and Greenville academies, 310; and secession, 1860, 338
 McBee, Vardry E., 489, 494
 McCall, Anne, 188
 McCall, Hext, 179
 McCall, Mrs. Hext, 179, 187-188, 208
 McCall, Susan, 188
 McCulloch, Hugh, Perry on, 387
 McCullough's, Perry speaks at, 474
 McDonald, C. J., 263
 McDuffie, George, 85, 87, 98, 103, 128, 142; Perry on, 49-50; nationalist, 87; and tariff of 1828, 88; and nullification, 105, 106, 140, 143, 144, 151, 156; governor, 174; Perry writes sketch of, 507
 McGowan, Samuel, and Perry-Taber controversy, 308; on Perry's speech, July, 1865, 381; on Negro garrison, 399; and state convention, 1865, 405, 414; on Fourteenth Amendment, 448; and election of 1868, 473; and election of 1876, 489
 McKenzie, Duncan, 38
 McLeod, Elizabeth, 77
 McLeod, Francis H., 77, 81, 266
 McLeod, Mary, 177
 McMaster, F. W., 459
Magnolia or Southern Apalachian, The, Perry contributes to, 205-206
 Magrath, A. G., 363, 367; resignation as United States district judge, 334; and secession, 1860, 335, 336, 337, 342; Confederate judge, 353; elected governor, 357; home confiscated, 374; arrest and imprisonment of, 375; South Carolina convention requests release of, 415, 418
 Manassas, Battle of, 360, 362, 365-366
 Manning, John L., and nullification, 105, 121, 147; Perry visits, 313; mentioned for provisional governor, 378; elected to United States Senate, 426-427
 "Mansion House," 40 and n., 46, 56, 73, 119, 177, 178, 180, 195, 488
 Manufacturing, in Greenville District, 196; urged by Perry, 209; cotton manufacture in South Carolina, 209-210
 Marshall, Dennis, 117-118, 131
 Martin, Alfred M., 357-358
 Martin, William E., on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 457-458
 Mauldin, William, 76
 Maverick, Samuel, 266
 Maxwell, Robert, 123
 Mazycke, Mr., 363

- Meade, George G., 403-404
- Memminger, Christopher G., 365; and nullification, 147; friend of Perry, 201; attacks Bank of the State, 234-236; votes against expulsion of Judge Hoar, 238; and secession movement, 1850, 246, 249-250, 265; and John Brown affair, 296-297; and Blue Ridge Railroad, 305; and public-school system, 308; and secession, 1860, 337, 341; during Reconstruction, 372, 374
- Middleton, Henry, and nullification, 137, 141, 142, 152; Perry writes sketch of, 507
- Middleton, Mr., on Perry, 255
- Miles, William P., Hammond to, 291, 321; Memminger to, 297; Rhett to, 300; and secession, 1860, 323-324, 345; letter to, on Perry, 328; Perry on, 363
- Miller, John, 27
- Miller, Stephen D., 102, 142
- Mills, Robert, on Pendleton District, 16; on Greenville, 71
- Minute Men, and secession, 1860, 330, 332, 337, 341
- Mississippi, and secession movement, 1850, 252; and election of 1860, 322; calls state convention, 336; urges South Carolina secession, 344-345; defeats Radical constitution, 1868, 467
- "Mississippi Plan," 485-486
- Mooney, J. A., tribute to Perry, 521
- Mooney, W. A., 343
- Montreal, Perry visits, 208
- Moore, Captain, 266
- Moses, Franklin J., Sr., in legislature, 227; Chief Justice, 476; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Moses, Franklin J., Jr., Speaker of South Carolina House, 478; elected governor, 480; and Chamberlain, 482, 484; Perry on, 497-498
- Mullins, W. S., 469
- Nance, Frederic, 208
- Nashville Convention, 244, 252
- National Democrats in South Carolina, genesis of, 278-279; and election of 1856, 281, 283-286; in legislature, 1857, 287; in congressional election, 1858, 292; and election of 1860, 297, 301; reform program of, 1852-1860, 302
- National Intelligencer*, letter of Perry in, 439-441
- National Union party, organization of, 444; national convention, 1866, 444-445
- Nat Turner insurrection, 218
- Negroes, in South Carolina, demoralization of after emancipation, 373, 399-402, 418; Perry urges humane treatment of, 407, 422; South Carolina code for, 414-415, 424-426; wooed by Democrats in election of 1868, 472-475; in election of 1876, 488, 490-492
- Negro seamen's act, of South Carolina, 237
- Negro suffrage, urged by Radical press, 405; Perry advocates qualified, 405; *Phoenix* on, 405; Perry opposes in Message to state convention, 1865, 408-409, and in public letters, 440, 443, 446-447; granted in Reconstruction Act, 449; campaign of Perry against, 451-455; and Conservative Convention, 460; adopted by South Carolina convention, 1868, 463; attacked by Perry, 466; and Democratic state convention, 1868, 464, 468; and election of 1868, 474-476
- Negro troops, in South Carolina, and labor disturbances, 398-400; Perry implores removal of, 394, 427, 436
- Nelson, G. E. W., 125, 135-136
- Newberry, 208, 213, 214, 215, 391
- Newberry County, 13
- Newberry *Rising Sun*, 316
- New Haven, Conn., Perry visits, 208
- New York, Perry visits, 208
- New York convention, 1868, Perry writes account of, 508
- New York *Herald*, on Perry's Greenville speech, July, 1865, 389; letter of Perry to on Fourteenth Amendment, 446
- New York *Tribune*, 344, 345, 378; on Perry's Greenville speech, July, 1865, 382-384; on restoration of slavery, 404; on Negro suffrage, 405; on Perry's Message to state convention, 1865, 411; on South Carolina's ratification of Thirteenth Amendment, 431
- Niagara Falls, Perry visits, 208
- Nicholson, Mr., 28

- Nineteenth Century*, Perry contributes to, 507
- Ninety-Six, 9, 385, 391
- Ninety-Six District, 13, 14, 16
- Noble, Patrick, 230
- Nullification, origin of, 87-89; "Exposition and Protest," 89; formation of Nullifier and Union parties, 91; Perry denounces theory, 95-96; party hostility, 92, 95, 103, 126-127; legislative campaign, 1830, 95-102; organization of "State Rights and Free Trade Associations," 103; perils of newspaper editing during, 120; denunciation of tariff of 1832, 122; legislative campaign, 1832, 123-124, 140-141; convention, 142-143; Ordinance, 142-143; agitation subsides, 149-151; reassembled convention, 1833, 152-156; effects of, 68, 154, 156; reconciliation of parties, 218. *See* Test oath
- Oconee County, 10, 16, 18, 22; Perry visits, 511
- O'Hanlon, James, 255; friend of Perry, 82; on launching of *Southern Patriot*, 251; opposes secession, 1850, 266; on disunion in Columbia, 256-257; on ruin of South, 1863, 370
- Old Stone Church, 133
- O'Neill, John Belton, 105, 198, 199; Speaker of South Carolina House, 60; friendship with Perry, 83; and nullification, 137, 141, 142, 143, 146, 153; advises moderation for Unionists, 157; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 214-216; accepts Compromise of 1850, 245; on Perry's election to state convention, 1851, 258; subscribes to *Southern Patriot*, 266; and Perry-Taber controversy, 307-308; on withdrawal of delegates at Charleston convention, 316; on Lincoln's election, 329; declines to run for secession convention, 343; on flight of Secessionists from Port Royal, 363
- Orangeburg, 323, 391
- Orion*, Perry writes for, 206
- Orr, James L., 292, 325, 339, 363; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 215-216; and congressional race, 1848, 222-225; and secession movement, 1850, 247; Co-operationist, 264, 265, 267, 270, 271-272; and "National Democrats," 278, 281, 285, 291; defeated for Speaker of House, 279; elected, 287; endorses Kansas-Nebraska Act, 280; on Democratic nomination for President, 1860, 298-299; and Democratic state convention, 1860, 299-300; urges diversification of industry, 303; and South Carolina College, 309; on secession at Charleston convention, 316; and secession, 1860, 324, 331, 336-337, 341; recommends Perry for Commissioner under Impressment Act, 357; endorses Perry for district judge, 359; on Greenville delegation to Washington, 384; and state convention, 1865, 405, 411, 412-413, 414; nominated for governor, 416; elected, 420; inauguration of, 433, 435; and National Union state convention, 444; and Philadelphia convention, 444-445; William Hayne Perry on, 448; and Reconstruction Act, 449-450; circuit judge under Radicals, 476, 504-505
- Paine, Tom, 310
- Palmetto Regiment, 223
- Pardons, of South Carolinians, 418
- Paris Mountain, 38, 75, 150
- Parish representative system, unfairness of, 18, 144, 228-229; resented by up country, 18; campaign of Perry for reform of, 229-230, 269-270; Perry recognizes in calling state convention, 1865, 385-386; recommends reform of, 408; state convention abolishes, 413
- Parker, Theodore, 193-194
- Patton, Montraville, 37, 77
- Pearis, Richard, 39, 74
- Pedee Banner* (Kingstree), and Reconstruction Act, 456-457
- Pendleton, P. C., 205
- Pendleton County, 16
- Pendleton Court House, 18, 26, 56, 124, 130, 133, 173; culture of, 17; summer resort, 17; protests test oath, 169-170; and secession movement, 1850, 246; and secession, 1860, 341; endorses Perry on Reconstruction Act, 457; Perry addresses Democrats at, 474; Perry addresses Farmers' Society at, 511

- Pendleton District, 22, 56, 88, 222; description of, 16-17; settlement of, 16-17; agriculture in, 26; and nullification, 101, 110, 140-141; and congressional election, 1848, 224-225; Perry fights for division of, 229-230; divided by legislature, 304
- Pendleton *Messenger*, 174, 268; founding of, 27 and n.; Nullifier journal, editorial tilt with Perry, 109-113; Townes-Perry controversy in, 113-114; on Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, 124-125; on Bynum's death, 134; and secession movement, 1850, 262, 271
- Penitentiary, urged by Perry, 230-231; recommended by Governor Aiken, 231; defeated, 231
- Pepoon, Benjamin F., 270
- Perry, Anna, daughter of Benjamin F. Perry, birth of, 186; death of, 313
- Perry, Anna Foster, mother of Benjamin F. Perry, marriage of, 19; described by Perry, 21; religion of, 36; and Perry-Bynum duel, 133; devotion of Perry to, 187; death of, 187
- Perry, Benjamin, father of Benjamin F. Perry, in American Revolution, 7-8; moves to Charleston, 8 and n.; settles in Piedmont, 11, 13-16; revisits Massachusetts, 15; homes of, 18 and n., 19, 23-24; marriage of, 19; described by Perry, 20; children of, 20; religion of, 36; attentions of Perry to, 187; death of, 187
- Perry, Benjamin F., Jr. (christened Arthur), birth of, 313; education of, 501-502; manages Sans Souci farm, 502-503; Miss Verner on, 504
- Perry, Benjamin F., ancestry of, 7-8, birth and parentage of, 20-21; boyhood home, 23, 24 and n.; early life, 24-32; and uncle Robert Foster, 32-33; education at Asheville Academy, 34-37; attends Greenville Academy, 38, 43; reads law, 44-46, 59; early political principles, 46-47, 49-55; training in public speaking, 46-48; early journalistic efforts, 49-55, 78-79; meets Calhoun, 55-57; visits legislature, 59-61; admitted to bar, 59, 62-63; begins law practice in Greenville, 63-70; social life, 73-76; character and habits, 69-70, 76, 80-81; love affairs, 76-79; friendships, 75-76, 81-86; and tariff of 1828, 88, 91, 93-94, 95, 100; editor of Greenville *Mountaineer*, 89 ff., 92-94; attacks "Exposition and Protest," 89-91; denounces nullification doctrine, 95-96, 97; campaigns against "Convention" candidates to legislature, 1830, 97-101; editorials against Nullifiers, 1831, 103-107, 120-121; speaks at Fourth of July celebration at Greenville, 107; altercation with Waddy Thompson, 99-100, 109; editorial tilt with Symmes of Pendleton *Messenger*, 109-113; press controversy with Henry H. Townes, 113-114; ensuing challenges and handbills, 114-118; fight with William Choice, 118-120; and legislative campaign, 1832, 123, 140; controversy with Turner Bynum of Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, 124-131; duel and aftermath, 131-135; addresses Union rally at Greenville, 137-139; delegate to nullification convention, 141-143; denounces Nullification Ordinance and test oath, 144-145; at Union state convention, 146-148; and Union Societies, 147, 148, 150-151; at reassembled state convention, 152-156; regards disunion as ultimate object of Nullifiers, 156, 159-160, 174; resigns from *Mountaineer*, 157-158; declines nomination to Congress, 1833, 161; trip to Charleston, Savannah, Augusta, 162; and test oath, 162-163; congressional race against Warren Davis, 1834, 163-169; on "compromise" test oath, 170-171; address at anniversary of Battle of Cowpens, 1835, 171-172; congressional race against Waddy Thompson, 1835, 172-176; popularity in Greenville District, 176; love affairs, 177-180; enters legislature, 1836, 178-179, 217; marriage to Elizabeth McCall, 179-180; description of wife, 180-181; description of self, 181-182; wife on, 183; home, 180 and n., 183-184; domestic life, 184-185, 368; children, 186, 313, 500-502; devotion to family, 182-183, 186-188, 368, 500-502; slaves, 185-186; appearance and personality, 4-5, 188-192, 504-507; religion, 192-194, 507; professional advancement, 196-198, 313; defends Yancey in murder trial, 198-

199; social life and friends, 198-201, 367, 504; reading, 182, 184, 201-202; library, 202-203, 499-500; writes *Journal*, *Autobiography*, newspaper and magazine articles, 203-206, 226; trustee of South Carolina College, 207; tour of North, 1846, 207-209; urges diversification of industry in South Carolina, 209-210, 302-303, 509; interest in scientific agriculture, 210, 503-504, 511; and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 211-212; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213-216; an independent Democrat, 219; supports Van Buren, 219-220; supports Southern movement and Calhoun's nomination for presidency, 220-222, 239-240; congressional race against Orr, 1848, 222-225; service in legislature, 225-226; fight for popular election of governor and presidential electors, 227-228, 303-304; for reform of representation, 228-230, 303-304; for revision of penal code and establishment of a penitentiary, 230-231; for judicial reform, 231-233; war against the Bank of the State, 234-236, 305; and distribution fund, 236-237; votes against expulsion of Judge Hoar, 237-238; on Calhoun's death, 243; accepts Compromise of 1850, 245-246; opposes disunion movement in South Carolina, 245-247; elected to legislature, 246; launches *Southern Patriot*, 248-252; appearance and reception of journal, 260-262; speech in legislature against secession, December 11, 1850, 254-255; elected to state convention, 257; congratulated on heading only Union delegation, 258-259; editorial campaign against separate secession of South Carolina, 262-271; urges election of Co-operation candidates to Southern congress, 271-272; warns against co-operative secession after election, 272-273; submits minority report in state convention, 275; on Rhett's resignation as United States senator, 276; on triumph of *Southern Patriot*, 276, 279; endorses Pierce, 277, 279; and "National Democrats," in South Carolina, 1852-1860, 278-292; supports Orr in movement for

participation in Cincinnati convention, 280-281, 283-286; sees safety of South and slavery in victory of Buchanan, 286-287; and Hammond on defense of slavery within Union, 287-292; and John Brown affair, 296-297; in Democratic state convention, 1860, 299-300; addresses South Carolina Institute, 1856, 303; and railroad development, 304-305; and reform of educational system, 305-309; controversy with William R. Taber, 306-308; and founding of Greenville Female College, 309-312; controversy with G. F. Townes, 310-311; combines *Patriot* with *Mountaineer*, 312; death of Anna and Frank, 313; remains in Charleston convention, 1860, 4-6, 314-316; defends course, 317-320; supports Breckinridge, 323; opposes secession over Lincoln's election, 325-328; speaks at Anderson, 331; on resignation of Magrath and Conner, 334; on Secessionist meeting in Greenville, 339; Ashmore opposes, 339-341; Opposition candidate for secession convention, 342-343; on influence of other Southern states, 345; on destruction of Union, 347; in Civil War, 348 ff.; goes with state, 348; urges support of Confederacy, 349-350; Hampton visits, 350; encourages enlistments, 351-352; Confederate district attorney, 353; in legislature, 354-356; Confederate commissioner of impressment, 357-359; Confederate judge, 359; emotional reaction to war, 359-365; visits Manassas, 365-366; daily life, 367-368; income, 368-369; predicts ruin of South, 1863, 369-370; addresses Greenville public meeting for return to Union, 1865, 379-381; reception of speech, 381-384, 388-389; appointed Provisional Governor, 378, 385; South Carolinians' approval of, 389-391; interview with Johnson, 385-387; proclamation, 386; restores former civil officials, 387; on President Johnson and Cabinet members, 387-388; speaks to Columbia and Greenville citizens, 391-393; correspondence with Johnson on progress of Reconstruction and on appointments, 393-396; and pardons, 396-397; appeals

- by Carolinians for redress of grievances, 397-402; on Negro troops, 400, 403-404, 427; and provost courts, 402-404; for qualified Negro suffrage, 405; Message to state convention, 1865, 406-411; Sidney Andrews on influence of, 411-412; secures abolition of parish representation and other democratic reforms, 413, 415; reports to Seward and Johnson on convention, 406, 412, 416-417; proclamations, 417; Messages to extra session of legislature, 1865, 421-423, 426; recommends Black Code, 424-426; elected United States senator, 426-427; and Thirteenth Amendment, 427-430; and war debt, 423, 428, 431-432, 435; Message to regular session of legislature, 433; Farewell Message, 433-434; letter to Seward, 436; relieved of duties, 437; thanks Johnson, 437-438; *Keowee Courier* on, 438; denied seat in Senate, 439; appeals in *National Intelligencer* for readmission of Southern states, 439-441; on freedmen, 442-443; and National Union party, 1866, 444; at Philadelphia convention, 444-445; opposes ratification of Fourteenth Amendment, 446-447; on Radical victory, 448; attacks Reconstruction Acts and urges people to defeat adoption, 450-455; reaction to in South Carolina, 455-459; in "Conservative" state convention, 460; appeals to Northern Democrats, 462; opposes ratification of constitution of 1868, 463-464; in Democratic state convention, 1868, 464; analysis of "Yankee Negro Constitution," 465-467; at New York convention, 469-470; visits Mt. Vernon, 470; attacks Radical legislature, 471-472; and campaign of 1868, 472-475; speaks at Greenville rally, 473; opposes Radical regime, 1868-1876, 476; on conditions in 1869, 477; supports "Union Reform Party," 1870, 477; Democratic candidate for Congress, 1872, 478-480; supports Green, 1874, 481-482; advocates Democratic support of Chamberlain, 1875, 483-484; at St. Louis convention, 1876, 485; campaigns for Hampton, 486-494; appeals to Negroes, 490-492; on disputed election, 495-496; pledges support to Hampton, 496-497; denounces Chamberlain and other Radicals, 497-498; moves to Sans Souci, 499-500; writes Autobiography, 1874, 501; other writings, 507-508; income, 502; laborers, 502-503; law practice in later life, 504-505; appearance and personality, 504-507; public addresses, 503, 508-511; attends Yorktown Centennial, 508; and railroads, 512; and public education in Greenville, 513; and old courthouse, 513; and gubernatorial campaign, 1880, 513-515; faith in Democratic party, 515; votes in 1886, 515; death and funeral, 516; obituaries on, 516-518; tributes to, 518-522
- Perry, Elizabeth McCall (Mrs. Benjamin F. Perry), 198; parentage, 179; engagement and marriage, 178-180; described by Perry, 180-181, 500; devotion to husband, 182-183; on Perry, 183, 368, 459; hospitality of, 198-199, 504; and Civil War, 368; and Sans Souci, 500; Miss Verner on, 504; trips, 313, 508
- Perry, Fannie, daughter of Benjamin F. Perry, birth of, 186; education and popularity of, 501; marriage and later life, 501, 504; trip with Perry, 469-470
- Perry, Frank, son of Benjamin F. Perry, birth of, 186; death of, 313
- Perry, Harriet D., sister of Benjamin F. Perry, 20-22
- Perry, Hext, son of Benjamin F. Perry, 516; birth of, 313; career of, 501
- Perry, John, ancestor of Benjamin F. Perry, 7
- Perry, Josiah, brother of Benjamin F. Perry, birth of, 20; devotion of Perry to, 22; farmer, 30; Perry on, 187
- Perry, Moses, grandfather of Benjamin F. Perry, 7
- Perry, Nathaniel, uncle of Benjamin F. Perry, 26; in Massachusetts, 7-8; moves to Charleston, 8; settles in Piedmont, 11, 13-16; letter of, 14-15
- Perry, Nathaniel James Foster, brother of Benjamin F. Perry, birth of, 20; farmer, 22; in Alabama, 29; Perry visits, 511
- Perry, Robert Hayne, son of Benjamin

- F. Perry, birth of, 313; education and talent, 501-502; death of, 502
- Perry, William Hayne, son of Benjamin F. Perry, birth and childhood, 186; education, 313, 348; lawyer, 348; joins Brooks Cavalry, 348; Perry visits at Manassas, 365-366; service, 366-367; at state convention, 1865, 405-406; secretary to Perry, 410 n.; on Orr, 448; later career, 500-501; congressman, 515
- Personal Liberty laws, Southern indignation over, 293
- Petigru, James L., 348; friend of Perry, 82-83, 199; Perry on, 82-83; and nullification, 101, 105, 106, 121, 146, 147; on test oath, 162; Whig, 219; on Calhoun, 243; accepts Compromise of 1850, 244; on *Southern Patriot*, 251; on disunion sentiment, 253, 261; at Charleston convention, 5; on South Carolina secession, 329, 332, 344, 346; on parish Secessionists, 398
- Pettus, John J., and secession, 1860, 322, 336
- Philadelphia, 501; Perry visits, 208; National Union convention in, 444-445
- Phillips, P., 153
- Pickens, Andrew, 17, 133
- Pickens County, 10, 14, 16
- Pickens District, and congressional election, 1834, 164-166, 168-169; and congressional election, 1835, 173, 175; and secession movement, 1850, 272; election district, 304
- Pickens, Francis W., 363, 378, 418; in legislature, 227; and secession movement, 1850, 247; and National Democrats, 285, 287; elected governor, 344; at secession convention, 346; raises volunteers, 351; and Executive Council, 354; in state convention, 1865, 405, 406, 411; candidate for United States Senate, 426
- Pickensville, 174
- Piedmont, *see* Up country
- Pierce, Franklin, 277
- Pike, James S., on South Carolina, 1873, 481
- Pinckney, Charles, Perry writes on, 508
- Pinckney, Thomas, 132
- Pinckneyville, 19
- Pinkney, William, 70
- Planter's Hotel, 195
- Pleasantburg, original name of Greenville, 39
- Poinsett, Joel R., 159, 208; buys home near Greenville, 83, 200; friend of Perry, 83, 199; and Saluda road, 83 n.; and nullification, 101, 105, 106, 121, 143, 147-150; and Greenville Lyceum, 207; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213-214; on Calhoun, 243-244; accepts Compromise of 1850, 245; on *Southern Patriot*, 251, 261; on Greenville convention election, 1851, 259; letter against secession, 264; Perry writes sketch of, 507
- Polk, James K., 208
- Pope, J. D., opposes Radicals, 476
- Pope, J. J., congratulates Perry, 459
- Poppenheim, John F., 376, 377
- Popular elections, campaign of Perry for in *Republican*, 54, in legislature, 227-228, in *Southern Patriot*, 269-270, in *Southern Quarterly Review*, 206; Perry recommends to state convention, 1865, 409; Perry recommends to legislature, 423; adopted, 415, 436
- Port Royal, 362-363
- Porter, A. Toomer, poverty after Civil War, 373; home confiscated, 373-374; on conditions in South Carolina, 374
- Porter, Francis H., 35; on Perry, 37
- Porter, W. D., and secession, 1860, 334; on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 390; nominated for governor, 1868, 464; opposes Radicals, 476
- Preston, John S., 391; and nullification, 120; and Bank of the State, 236
- Preston, William C., 302; Perry on, 61-62; and nullification, 102; relations with Perry, 200, 207, 226; president of South Carolina College, 207, 309; in Congress, 217; and election of 1840, 220; on Calhoun, 243-244; accepts Compromise of 1850, 244; on *Southern Patriot*, 276; Perry speaks on, 509
- Price, William P., establishes Greenville *Southern Enterprise*, 312; endorses withdrawal at Charleston, 317; and secession, 1860, 331, 337-338, 339
- Providence *Journal*, on Perry, 328
- Provisional governors, appointment of, 376-378

- "Provisional Governorship of South Carolina, The," Perry writes, 508
- Quebec, Perry visits, 208
- Quitman, John A., and secession movement, 1850, 247, 252, 263
- "Radical Frauds, The," articles by Perry, 513-514
- Radical press, misrepresents Southern sentiment toward Union, 382-384; claims South intends restoring slavery, 404, 411, 431, 442; attacks Black Code, 414-415, 425-426; agitates enfranchisement of Negroes, 384, 405, 443
- Radical Republicans, schemes of for South, 382-384; deny seats to Southern congressmen, 439; struggle with Johnson, 442-443; and Fourteenth Amendment, 443, 445-446, 467, 470; and campaign of 1866, 445, 448; pass Reconstruction Acts, 449, 454, 467; win Negroes in South, 450, 453, 454, 465, 474; and election to state constitutional conventions, 461; secure control of South Carolina government, 1868, 466; impeachment of Johnson, 467-468; and presidential election, 1868, 475; regime in South Carolina, 470-471, 476 ff.; overthrown in 1876, 486 ff.; in gubernatorial campaign, 1880, 513-515
- Ravenel, Henry W., 372-373
- Reconstruction, Johnson's plan of, 375-376; execution of in South Carolina, 395 ff.; joint committee on, 439; act of March 2, 1867, 449; reception of, 449-450; supplemental acts, 454, 467; letters of Perry in opposition, 450-455; attitude of South Carolina press toward, 455-457; endorsement of Perry, 457-460; protest against acts by Conservative Convention, 460-461; execution of Radical plan, 462 ff.; readmission of states, 467; end of Radical rule in South Carolina, 497-498
- "Red Shirt" campaign, *see* Hampton
- Reed, J. P., copartnership with Perry, 197; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 215-216; delegate to Charleston convention, 300; congressman, 476
- Reedy River, 38, 39
- Reedy River Falls, 38, 74, 178, 206
- Reese, Dr., 131
- Reidsville Female College, Perry speaks at, 509
- "Reminiscences of Public Men," by Perry, 507, 508, 509
- Representation, *see* Parish representative system
- Republican party, formation of, 294. *See* Radical Republicans
- "Revolutionary Incidents," by Perry, 205-206
- "Revolutionary History of South Carolina, The," by Perry, 206
- Rhett, Albert, 218
- Rhett, James, 218
- Rhett, R. B., Jr., on state Democratic convention, 1860, 299-301
- Rhett, Robert Barnwell, described by Perry, 61; and nullification, 102, 153; for Southern confederacy, 156; friend of Perry, 201; and Calhoun, 217-218; and election of 1848, 223-224; at Nashville convention, 244; for separate secession, 1850-1851, 243, 244, 247, 253, 264-265; at state convention, 1852, 274; resignation from Senate, 276; on Perry's stand in convention, 276; against reopening of slave trade, 283; defeated for Senate, 1857, 287; reaction against in South Carolina, 292; arouses Southern nationalism, 294-295; and secession plans, 1860, 295, 316; serenaded during Charleston convention, 3; delegate to Richmond convention, 320; course in campaign of 1860, 321, 323, 332-333; speaks for secession, 332-333, 336; loses gubernatorial race, 344; in secession convention, 346; in Civil War, 357, 363, 365; Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Richardson, John P., 218
- Richardson, John S., 105, 109, 141, 142
- Richmond, 316, 317, 320; Perry visits, 365
- Rivers, Prince, and Hamburg Riot, 485
- Robinson, George E., *et al.*, on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 458
- Robinson, Horse Shoe, 17
- Robinson, William, 42, 46, 75
- Roebuck, Benjamin, Perry writes sketch of, 508
- Rosemont, Perry visits, 148, 177
- Rowland's Hotel, 195

- Roxbury, Massachusetts, 7
- Ruffin, Edmund, propagandist for secession, 294; on South Carolina and secession, 322; and secession, 1860, 329, 333
- Ruff's, 13
- Saluda factory, Perry visits, 210
- Saluda Mountains, 34, 38
- Saluda Mountain road, 71, 72, 83
- Sans Souci, Perry's home, 499, 500 and n.
- Saratoga Springs, Perry visits, 208
- Savannah, 211, 368, 371; Perry visits, 162
- Saxton, Rufus, policy in Freedmen's Bureau, 398, 401, 418-419
- Scotch-Irish, 10-11
- Scott, Edwin J., on Radical government in South Carolina, 481
- Scott, Robert K., corrupt administration as governor, 470-471, 477; denounced by Chamberlain, 482
- Scruggs, John P., 494
- Seabrook, Whitemarsh B., 235, 264; and secession movement, 1850, 243, 247-248, 265
- Secession, incipient during nullification, 87, 156; secession movement of 1850-1852, 239-277; submerged, 1852 to 1860, 278, 292; attempt of slave traders to attain, 281-283; plans of Rhett and other radicals for, 287, 294-296; effect of sectional clashes of 1850's on, 292-294; attempt over Harper's Ferry affair, 296-297; movement of 1860, 314 ff.; accomplished, 345-346; secession of other cotton states, 347; repeal of Ordinance, 1865, 412
- Seddon, James A., 358
- Selby, Julian, on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 456
- Semmes, Thomas J., 367
- Senter, Jesse, 257
- Seward, William H., Perry on, 388; and Perry on colored troops, 400; notifies Perry to continue duties, 421; and Perry on Thirteenth Amendment, 429-430; on war debt, 430, 431-432; relieves Perry of duties as Provisional Governor, 437
- Seymour, Horatio, 470, 476
- Shannon, William, 27
- Shannon, William M., on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 391
- Sharkey, William L., in Nashville convention, 244; and election of 1860, 322; Provisional Governor, 387
- Sherborn, Massachusetts, home of Perry's ancestors, 7, 8
- Sheriff, slave of Perry, 70, 185
- Sherman, W. T., 359, 371
- Silliman, Benjamin, 208
- Simkins and Woody, quoted, 379
- Simms, William Gilmore, edits *City Gazette*, 101; edits *Magnolia*, 205-206; friendship with Perry, 206; edits *Southern Quarterly Review*, 206; on Columbia after fire, 371-372; editor of *Columbia Phoenix*, 381, 384 and n.; on Perry's Greenville speech, 1865, 381-382; retorts to attack on speech by *Tribune*, 384; on Negro troops, 400-401
- Simons, James, in Charleston convention, 315
- Simpson, W. D., elected to Congress, 476; in campaign of 1876, 488-489
- Sitton, J. B., on Perry and Reconstruction Act, 457, 459
- Slave trade, attempt of radicals to reopen, 281-283
- Slavery, invades up country, 11; Perry's view of in youth, 31-32; his later attitude, 94, 175, 219, 220, 265-267, 275, 287-290; desire of South Carolina aristocracy to perpetuate, 218; issue in secession movement, 1850, 265-267; abolition of by South Carolina convention, 412-413
- Smallpox, in Columbia, 344-345
- Smith and Hill, 223
- Smith, Morgan, on Perry, 503
- Smith, Robert Barnwell, *see* Rhett
- Smith, William, 87; state rights resolutions of attacked by Perry, 50-53; Unionist during nullification, 103, 105, 121, 137
- Society Hill, 357
- South Carolina, early settlements in, 8-11, 16-17; accepts state rights creed, 87; nullification in, 87 ff.; in Southern movement, 220 ff.; secession movement, 1850, 243-259; National Democrats in, 278 ff.; in election of 1856, 281-286; and Harper's Ferry affair, 296-297; in election of 1860, 3-6, 297-

- 300, 314-333; secession, 1860, 333-346; attitude toward Confederate Government, 356-357; revolts against rule of Convention and Executive Council, 354-355; prostration after Civil War, 371-373; military occupation of, 375; provisional government in, 395-435; readmission of, 470; Radical government in, 470-483; redemption of, 485 ff.; maps of, 12, 65
- South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company, 211, 212
- South Carolina College, 61, 124, 230; opening of, 58; Perry visits, 62; Perry a trustee of, 207; Perry endorses university plan for, 308-309, 423
- South Carolina Constitution, provisions for up-country representation, 18; democratization by state convention, 1865, 415; constitution of 1868, 463, 465-467
- South Carolina Convention, in nullification struggle, 142-143, 152-156; in secession movement, 1850-1852, 274-276; secession convention, 1860, 344-346; retains control of state government to December, 1862, 354-355; convention of 1865, 406-417; constitutional convention of 1868, 462-463, 465-466, 476 n.
- South Carolina Court of Appeals, examines law applicants, 58, 62; annuls militia oath, 1834, 163; Perry attends, 198; re-created, 1859, 233, 304
- South Carolina Executive Council, 354-355
- South Carolina Institute, Charleston convention meets in hall of, 1860, 3; Orr and Perry address annual fair of, 303
- South Carolina legislature, condemns protective tariff and internal improvements, 51, 87; members in 1826, 60-62; calls nullification convention, 141; passes bill to enforce Nullification Ordinance and enacts test oath, 146, 148, 161, 169; and railroad projects, 211-214; under dictation of Calhoun, 217-218; nominates Calhoun for President, 220; Perry's career in, 225-238; membership of, 1850, 246-247, 253; passes convention bill, 1850, 253; election for, 1860, 330-331; chooses Breckinridge electors, 332; passes convention bill, 1860, 334-335; adjourns to Charleston, 344; legislature of 1865 passes Black Code, 426, 436; elects Perry United States senator, 426-427; ratifies Thirteenth Amendment, 430-431; passes act for popular election of presidential electors, 436; establishes University of South Carolina, 436-437; on war debt, 437; Radical legislature of 1868, 470-471; legislature of 1886 pays tribute to Perry, 521-522
- South Carolina Lunatic Asylum, 58-59
- South Carolina Railroad Company, 212, 213
- South Carolina volunteers, in Confederate Army, 350-351, 354
- "Southern Address," 1849, 239
- Southern congress, *see* Southern convention
- Southern convention, Perry advocates as only means of redressing wrongs of South, during nullification, 122, 137-139; urged by Union party, 1832, 137; Perry advocates in secession movement of 1850, 254, 264; futile calling of by Second Nashville convention, 252; action of South Carolina legislature upon, 253; election to in South Carolina, October, 1851, 271-272; Perry recommends in 1860, 327-328
- Southern movement, origin of, 220-221; launching of by Calhoun, 1849, 239-241
- Southern nationalism, arousal of in 1850's, 294-297
- Southern party, plan of Calhoun for, 220, 223, 239
- Southern Quarterly Review*, Perry contributes to, 206
- Southern Rights Association, 264-265
- Southwestern Railway Bank, 212
- Spartanburg, 137, 197, 198; and nullification convention, 141; in secession movement, 1850, 246, 260
- Spartanburg District, 140, 171
- Speed, James, Perry on, 388
- Speights, A. M., founds Greenville *Daily News*, 508
- Spratt, L. W., and revival of slave trade, 281-283; and secession, 1860, 335
- Springfield, O'Neill's home, 83
- St. James', Santee, 402
- St. John's, Berkeley, 391, 399, 402

- St. Peter's Parish, 399
- Stanton, Edwin M., Perry interviews, 388
- State House, Columbia, 226
- State Rights, Perry refutes doctrine, 1826, 50-52; legislature passes Smith's resolutions on, 1825, 51; Calhoun and McDuffie champion, 1828, 88-89; Perry denounces in *Mountaineer*, 90-91, 94. *See also* Nullification, Secession
- "State Rights and Free Trade Associations," 103, 107
- Stephens, Alexander H., and secession movement, 1850, 241-242, 252; and secession, 1860, 322, 336; South Carolina convention requests release of, 1865, 415
- Stephens, Linton, 322
- Stevens, Thaddeus, 439
- Stokes, John W., 331
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 293
- Suffrage, Perry on, 53, 408-409. *See also* Negro suffrage
- Sullivan, C. P., 310-311
- Sullivan, J. M., 331
- Summerville, 377
- Sumner, Charles, 293
- Sumter, Thomas, 110
- Sumter, 137, 198, 260, 320
- Sumter *Watchman*, on Perry's Messages, 1865, 410, 423
- Sunny South*, on Perry, 1875, 505
- Symmes, Frederick W., tilt with Perry, 109-113
- Swain, Althea, 36
- Swain, David L., 36, 37
- Swain, Mary, 36
- Taber, William R., controversy with Perry, 306-308
- Table Rock, 38, 75
- "Tanglewood," 83
- Tariff, and economic decline of 1820's, 51, 87; attitude of Perry on, 52, 88, 91; protest of South Carolina against tariffs of 1824, 1828, 87-88; McDuffie on tariff of 1828, 88; Calhoun's "Exposition and Protest," 89; Nullifiers accept Clay's compromise, 150; tariff of 1842, 220
- Taylor, Colonel, of Columbia, 105, 132, 226
- Taylor, Zachary, 223-224
- Test oath, by nullification convention, 143; indignation of Unionists over, 143; legislature prescribes, 146; action of reassembled convention on, 1833, 153-155; speech of Perry against, 153-155; policy of Unionists toward, 159; defined by legislature, 1833, 161; reaction of Unionists, 161-162; Perry and Petigru on, 162; annulled by Court of Appeals, 163; Perry campaigns against in congressional race, 1834, 166-168; Unionists reconciled, 174
- Texas, annexation of, 219
- Thespian Society, of Greenville, 196
- Thirteenth Amendment, attitude of Perry on, 427-428; action of other states on, 428; Perry interchanges telegrams with Johnson and Seward regarding, 428-429; ratified by legislature, 430-431
- Thomas, John, 83
- Thomas, John P., in Democratic state convention, 1868, 464; speaks at Greenville Democratic rally, 473; opposes Radical regime, 476; on Perry, 522
- Thompson, Colonel, of Spartanburg, 266
- Thompson, Caroline, 48, 76-77
- Thompson, Judge Waddy, 41, 48, 71; Perry on, 81
- Thompson, Waddy, Jr., in Greenville debating club, 46; presides over Calhoun dinner, 56; his biographical sketch of Perry cited, 60 and n.; lawyer of Greenville, 64; Perry on, 64, 66; solicitor of Western circuit, 68; leads opposition to tariff, 1828, 88; Nullifier, 92, 96-97, 98-101; altercations with Perry, 99-100, 109; and Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, 124, 136; Perry on, 129, 131; reconciliation with Perry, 160, 191; in congressional race against Perry, 1835, 172-175; on Perry's personality, 191; on Perry's rank as lawyer, 197; and Yancey-Earle quarrel, 198-199; friendship with Perry, 198-199, 200; Perry visits in Washington, 207-209; and Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, 211; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213-214, 215; op-

- poses Calhoun in Congress, 217; and election of 1840, 220; on Calhoun's death, 243; accepts Compromise of 1850, 244; and launching of *Southern Patriot*, 248-249; on South Carolina disunion, 1851, 256; Perry on, 266; and Perry-Taber controversy, 308; during Civil War, 367
- Thompson, William, 43, 75
- Thornwell, James, H., 307
- Tilden, Samuel J., 485, 487, 494-495
- Tillman, George D., and electoral reform, 304; in state convention, 1865, 411
- Timme, Mr., 49
- Tomlinson, Reuben, 478
- Toney, James, 118
- Toney, William, 40, 41, 42, 81
- Toney's Old Fields, 99, 109
- Toombs, Robert, and secession movement, 1850, 242, 252, 254, 256; and election of 1860, 322-323; resigns from Senate, 335
- Tories, 105-106
- Townes, George F., friend of Perry, 43, 191, 198; and Turner Bynum, 136 n.; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213, 215; in Anti-Wilmot Proviso Meeting, 240; controversy with Perry, 310-311; and secession, 1860, 338; tributes to Perry, 519, 520
- Townes, Henry H., friend of Perry, 75, 77; Nullifier, 97; newspaper controversy with Perry, 113-114; challenges and posts Perry, 115-116, 118
- Townes, Samuel, 352
- Towns, George W., Governor of Georgia, 246
- Townsend, John, 248, 398
- Trade, in up country, 11; between West and South Carolina, 40-41, 71
- Treasury agents, 397
- Trenholm, George A., 333, 375, 415
- Trescot, William Henry, Secessionist, 1850, 248; agent to Washington, 1865, 415, 418, 426, 433; in senatorial election, 426
- Tugaloo River, 15, 18, 23, 130-132, 187, 511
- Turnbull, Robert J., denounces tariff, 87; in nullification convention, 1832, 143; in reassembled convention, 1833, 153; Perry on, 153; and Rhett, 156
- Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 293
- Union, 137, 246, 284
- Union District, 19
- Union Leagues, 474
- Union party, formation of, 91; in legislative election, 1830, 101; in legislature, 102; Union press, 92, 101, 103, 120; in Fourth of July celebration in Charleston, 1831, 106; ascendant in Greenville, 1831, 107, 121; Union caucus of legislature warns people against nullification, 1832, 121; defeated in legislative race, 1832, 140; decision as to running candidates for convention, 141; role in nullification convention, 142-143; protest against action of legislature by Greenville Unionists, 145; Union state convention, December, 1832, 146-148; organizes "Union Societies," 147, 150; in reassembled state convention, 1833, 152-155; adopts policy of conciliation, 156-157, 159-160; and test oath, 159-163; makes oath the issue in congressional race, 1834, 165-166; supports Perry, 168; reconciled to compromise test oath, 174; declines after 1834, 172, 175-176; dissolved, 218
- Unionists, reconciliation with Nullifiers, 1840, 218; accept Compromise of 1850, 244-245; and launching of *Southern Patriot*, 248-252; strength in South, 1858, 292
- "Union Reform Party," in election of 1870, 477-478
- "Union Societies," during nullification, 147, 149-151
- University of South Carolina, founding of, 437. *See also* South Carolina College
- Up country, description of, 8-9; settlement of, 9-10; economy of, 11; social conditions in, 41-42; conflict with low country, 17-18; mostly Unionist, 1830, 101; opposes separate secession, 1851, 272
- Vallandigham, C. L., 444-445; Perry on, 445
- Van Buren, Martin, Perry visits, 208; Calhoun supports, 217; Perry champions in election of 1840, 219-220
- Van Winkle, John, 376

- Vaocluse, 209
 Verner, Mattie, on Sans Souci, 504
 Vesey plot, 218, 237
 Vicksburg, 366, 369
 Virginia springs, Perry visits, 209
- Waddell, Edmund, 40
 Wadsworth and Turpin, 8, 13
 Walhalla, 504; Perry speaks at, 1868, 474; Perry addresses "Hampton Day" rally, 1876, 487-488; Perry visits 511
 Walhalla *Courier*, on Foster Perry, 511
 Walhalla Female College, Perry addresses, 510-511
 Walker, Tandy, lawyer of Greenville, 42, 44, 45, 64, 69; boards at Crittenden's, 46; Perry on, 75; Nullifier, 98-101, 123; and Greenville *Southern Sentinel*, 136; and Greenville and Columbia Railroad, 213
 Walker's Cross Roads, Perry speaks at, 474
 Walterboro, 399
 War debt, repudiation of, Perry ignores in Message to state convention, 1865, 407; Perry on, in Message to legislature, 423; Columbia *Phoenix* on, 423-424; Johnson urges, 428; telegrams of Perry, Johnson, Seward regarding, 428, 430, 431, 432, 435; Orr refers to legislature at instigation of Perry, 435-436; legislature postpones action, 437; state constitutional convention repudiates, 1868, 465
 Wardlaw, David L., Perry on, 60; lawyer of Abbeville, 66; and Perry-Thompson altercation, 109; and Yancey-Earle trial, 198; and Greenville academy property case, 310; in state convention, 1865, 405-406; confers with President Johnson, 418; prepares Black Code, 422, 424
 Ware, R. H., on Perry, 503
 Ware, T. Edwin, 109, 331
 Washington, George, 8, 50, 307; Perry writes on, 508
 Washington, 183; Perry visits, 207-208, 444
 Washington *Daily Chronicle*, 389
 Washington District, South Carolina, 16
 Watson, William, 28
 Webb, Dr., of Anderson, 251
 Webster, Daniel, 92, 97; Perry asks counsel of, 160, 232-233; Perry on, 208; and Compromise of 1850, 242; Perry sends speech to, 254; Perry writes sketch of, 507
 Wells, O. H., founds Greenville *Mountaineer*, 1829, 89; political principles of, 89-90; suspends *Mountaineer*, 104; on congressional election, 1834, 169; engages Yancey as editor, 170
 Whaley, William, 377
 Whig party, in South Carolina, 217, 218-219, 223
 Whipper, W. J., 484
 Whitaker, Mr., of *Palmetto Banner*, 269
 Whittemore, B. F., 474
 Whitten, Silas R., 141
 Whitner, Joseph N., lawyer of Anderson, 66, 198-199, 247, 363
 "Who Freed the Slaves?," by Perry, 490-491
 Wickliffe, William, 43, 49
 Williams, A. B., obituary on Perry, 516
 Williams, Matthew J., 258; on Perry's speech, 1850, 255
 Williams, John N., and *Southern Patriot*, 261, 266
 Willington, A. S., 269
 Wilmot Proviso, and Southern resistance, 220-222, 239
 Wilson, B. H., in Charleston convention, 314
 Wilson, John L., Nullifier, 155
 Winnsboro, 398
 Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, on Perry's appointment as Provisional Governor, 378, 389-390
 Woodlands, home of W. G. Simms, 206
 Woodward, Charles W., on Fourteenth Amendment, 447; Perry replies, 447
 Wright, Cal, on Perry, 503
 Wright, James, 43
- Yancey, William L., reads law with Perry, 198; Unionist editor of Greenville *Mountaineer*, 170, 205; tried on murder charge, 198, 199 and n.; congressman, 207; and secession movement, 1850, 263; arouses Southern nationalism in 1850's, 294-295; and plans of secession, 295; in Charleston convention, 3, 314, 316, 319; and

- presidential campaign, 1860, 321, 329;
Perry on, 365
- Yates, Joseph A., 377
- Yeadon, Richard, editor of Charleston
Courier, 101, 200; friend of Perry,
200-201; Whig, 219; on Compromise
of 1850, 244-245; on disunion in
Charleston, 247, 256; on Taber speech,
307; poverty after Civil War, 373;
- home confiscated, 374; on Perry's ap-
pointment as Provisional Governor,
390
- York, 137, 260
- Yorktown Centennial, Perry attends, 508
- Yorkville *Pioneer*, 103
- Young, Henry C., lawyer of Laurens,
66, 198, 247
- Young, W. C., 48, 49

DATE DUE

MAR 9 '49

MAR 28 '49

APR 19 '49

Woody

HISTORY 204

3-DAY RESERVE

NOV 17 '49

CARREL NO.

MIL 12 '51

NOV 21 '51

Duke University Libraries



D00546296W

923.273

P462K

c.2

496287

